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THE NATION

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WATERGATE: *'At the End of This Road Lies Tyranny'*

Ramsey Clark

GOLD, GREED & CONFUSION

V. Lewis Bassie

●

Al Richmond / 'A Long View from the Left'

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EDITORIALS

The Case for Resignation

The inquiry into the Watergate cover-up now centers directly on the President. In a second desperate effort to deflect the spotlight, he has entered a new and inconsistent plea which, like the first, merely confirms his deep involvement. At the outset and for a period of ten months the White House curtly dismissed the Watergate break-in as a third-rate burglary. That was the initial or arrogant phase. Then, as the noose tightened, the President decided to be humble and contrite. That might be called the honeymoon phase or Checkers II, with conciliatory gestures to the Congress and timid mini-apologies to the press. But it scarcely survived the April 30th address, which was a disaster; even Nixon's friends were repelled by it. And, in the immediate wake of this address, the rope tightened by several notches when the Ervin hearings opened. So the President has now decided to get tough; his latest statement is the opening phase of what will no doubt be a ruthless counterattack in which he will pull all the stops on "national security" and similar themes.

But already the question is being asked: why did the President wait so long to explain the background which he now says prompted him to order various internal security initiatives—some involving by his own admission "surreptitious entry" and "breaking and entering"—and to set up "the plumbers"? The answer is that he maintained a lofty silence about Watergate as long as he dared and came forth, finally, with the April 30th and May 22nd rationales only when disclosures compelled him to abandon the pretense of noninvolvement. If placed in context, both statements have the effect of confirming the feeling which most people have that he did know about the cover-up. But the practical political problem the nation now faces cuts much deeper than the legal issues: 58 per cent of those interviewed in a recent *Time* poll (May 28) believe that the President knew of the cover-up. His latest statement can only confirm this belief. So the harsh question—the question that was there all along—can no longer be avoided: what is to be done now that it is clear that the President was involved in the cover-up or, in any case, has accepted responsibility for it?

The remedy of impeachment exists; it was placed in the Constitution to be used if necessary. But it presents serious political problems: it would involve a bitter debate in the Congress, culminating in a protracted trial before the Senate as "the High Court of impeachment." Meanwhile, the President's second term would be drawing to a close and the existing stalemate would continue. Despite these practical political difficulties impeachment may be unavoidable. Censure has been suggested as an alternative, but a resolution of censure would involve sharp partisan debate and, if adopted, would further cripple the President's leadership—that is, if he ignored the hint and failed to resign. Resignation offers the best way out of the impasse. Senator Goldwater puts the case succinctly: "If it can be proved that he lied, resignation would have to be considered. It would be quick. Everything would be over, ended. It wouldn't drag on like impeachment." But the President will not resign unless massive pressure for his resignation is generated or unless he is faced with impeachment. In either of those situations he might. He could—and would—say that he is cleaner than a hound's tooth, but had decided, after the manner of President Johnson, to stand down. He could then retire to San Clemente and write his memoirs—after shredding bales of documents. If he loves America as much as he says he does, that is what he should do. But we wouldn't bet on it.

Already the word is out that the country cannot afford the risks of impeachment or resignation. We must have, so the argument goes, the expert guidance of the Nixon-Kissinger team in foreign affairs. But the record hardly suggests that Nixon is indispensable for the proper conduct of American foreign policy. He has two televised "spectaculars" to his credit: the trips to Peking and Moscow. And he did finally secure the release of the POWs and the return of ground combat troops. But there is no peace in Vietnam, serious trouble looms in Indonesia and the Philippines, tensions mount in the Middle East, Africa is a lost continent insofar as the White House is concerned, European-U.S. relations are in disarray, Japan has become disaffected, Latin America suffers from malign neglect, and the United Nations has been quarantined. On the domestic side, Nixon's record would warrant recall if such an option existed. In a remarkably tough editorial, *Business Week* (May 12) charges that we face a violent boom-bust explosion and that the Administration "has lost its grip on the economy." A former economic adviser to the President, Pierre Rinfret, is quoted as saying that current Nixon economic policies are "a joke . . . one of the funniest economic games ever played on the American people." But given the sharp rise in food prices the joke is hardly sidesplitting. No point would be served by extending the list of other neglected or mismanaged domestic issues.

Tied in with the indispensability argument is the Agnew argument. The Vice President's backers would be "paused," we suspect, at the prospect of his occupancy of the White House; it certainly "pauses" us. But Agnew, if he did become President, would doubtless "clean house," restructure the White House staff, and attempt to conciliate the Congress by pursuing moderate policies. No doubt he would continue to play golf with Frank Sinatra, but Nixon continues to hobnob with Bebe Rebozo. One must concede, also, that the prospect of Agnew nominating his successor as Vice President is not reassuring. Even so the country could probably survive Agnew with less risk than would accrue from keeping Nixon in office.

The difficulty with either impeachment or resignation, however, relates to the immediate political problem. The word is already out that the Democrats would rather keep Nixon on the griddle for the balance of his term than face up to the responsibilities of offering an alternative leadership as an opposition party. The fact is that neither party is well-organized for strong leadership. The Democrats seem to relish the prospect of having a discredited lame duck in the White House for the next three years and more. Agnew, some of them reason, might turn into another Calvin Coolidge and make off with the prize in 1976. It is of little avail to point out that the Democrats may be making a serious miscalculation if they assume that the country can somehow rock along under the com-

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promised leadership of the President. It may be later than we think. Nixon is turning ugly, as his latest statement implies, and the political weather could become violent, with unpredictable results. He commands some heavy artillery. He is Commander in Chief; he holds the keys to the federal prisons; he has the power of appointment. Archibald Cox, while not ideal, is probably as good a nominee for Special Prosecutor as could be expected from this Administration; but the Department of Justice, the FBI, the CIA and the Pentagon are still counters which the President can move about on the political checkerboard. Given these resources, the reluctance of the Democrats to "rock the boat," and the cry that will go up to rally round the President, he can probably ride out the storm.

But this estimate does not mean that the public should remain silent. The President *should* resign and he should be told to do so with an emphasis and volume that might impress him. It is not a question, in the last analysis, of which laws, if any, he has violated; the basis on which he should be asked to resign is that he can no longer fulfill the public trust, he no longer can govern; he has lied once too often and too much damage has been done. Some forty or fifty high policy appointments are vacant. Kissinger has been tarred with the Watergate brush. Bringing General Haig into the White House was probably illegal and certainly involves a misuse of a Deputy Chief of Staff and a possible conflict of interests. The availability of John Connally as an "unpaid" adviser suggests the frenzied search for quick expedients. How long can we go on with "acting" directors of various key agencies? The President has not sought to clean house because he can't, at least not at this time; his political capital is too low. He has shifted people about but there has been no real change.

The fact that he has said that he will not abandon his "responsibilities" merely means that he will not resign unless he feels he has no alternative. Conceivably, popular pressures for resignation could become formidable. But if Mr. Nixon will not resign—if on the contrary he decides to battle it out by resuming the domestic cold war which he helped initiate in the late 1940s—then impeachment, the ultimate remedy, might have to be invoked. As Crosby Noyes writes in the Washington *Star*: "It is no longer a question of proving foreknowledge, complicity or criminality of any kind. No matter how fair-minded the American people may be, they will not suffer a leadership that has betrayed and humiliated them. I for one am convinced that when Nixon realizes the extent to which his authority has been shattered . . . he will resign."

Police Blackmail

One of the fringe benefits of Watergate has been the incidental revelations it has provided in matters not directly related. Over the years critics of the FBI—the few who have braved public obloquy—have charged that a large part of J. Edgar Hoover's legendary power over the Congress was based on blackmail. This dreadful heresy always evoked howls of anguish. Watergate, however, has

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SUMMER SCHEDULE

During the summer, *The Nation* will *not* appear on the following dates: July 9, 23, August 6, 20.

now made the unthinkable thinkable. In October 1971 Hoover forced the retirement of William C. Sullivan, his former assistant director. Hoover was such a martinet that when Sullivan took issue with him on matters of policy he would—especially in his later years—fly into a rage instead of debating. When Hoover issued an order that the FBI was to have "absolutely nothing" to do with the *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Sullivan remonstrated that this was impermissible in a free society. After a series of such clashes, Sullivan was ousted.

Sullivan now says that Hoover was not of sound mind in his last few years, but that one faculty survived: "That fellow was a master blackmailer. . . ." He always had been: in the May 21st *New York Times*, Wallace Turner recounts at length Hoover's harassment of Martin Luther King, Jr., who had had the temerity to criticize the Bureau in 1962-63. A former FBI agent, Arthur Murtagh, tells how King's telephones were tapped for years—at least 5,000 conversations were recorded. Much of this snooping, as also in the case of members of Congress, was concerned with alleged sexual misconduct.

No one was too high for Hoover's ministrations. Sullivan relates (to Jack Nelson of the *Los Angeles Times*) that files pertaining to the Ellsberg case and other matters might have been used against Attorney General Mitchell or even President Nixon, so Sullivan turned these records over to Robert Mardian, then Assistant Attorney General, who gave them to John Ehrlichman, in whose possession they were ultimately found. Apparently Hoover feared he might be pressured to retire.

Sullivan tells how Hoover operated with Congressmen. As soon as he found out something about a Senator or Representative or his family, he would send an agent around to the victim's office with helpful information to the effect that, in the course of an unrelated investigation, the FBI had come up with data on, say, the man's daughter. " '. . . we wanted you to know this,' the kindly agent would say . . . 'but don't have any concern, no one will ever learn about it.' " From that time on, Hoover had such Congressmen right in his pocket.

Several Representatives have invoked *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* against Mr. Sullivan. To speak only good of the dead is all very well in relation to private persons, but with regard to public figures it is pernicious nonsense. History has its rights; even more important, an ongoing evil must be stopped at some point, even if the principal perpetrator is no longer on the scene.

At this moment the Congress has, thanks to Watergate, an opportunity to benefit the country, the FBI and itself. A permanent director of the FBI must be named shortly. As a result of the protracted Hoover tenure and of his misdemeanors, the agency is in poor shape. The country is in a chastened mood. The time for action is now.

¶There must be a thorough investigation of the extent to which, over the years, the FBI has illegally concocted "files" based on wiretaps, bugs and other surveillance on individuals who were not under investigation for the suspected commission of a criminal act.

¶Congress should make public the fact that the FBI has been guilty of illegal eavesdropping and get a firm commitment from the future director, with the Attorney General's concurrence, that such offenses will no longer be countenanced.

¶As further insurance, Congress should pass prohibitory legislation.

¶All past files based on illegal action should be consigned to shredding machines or burn cans.

The future of constitutional government in the United States may well depend on resolute Congressional action to prevent a recurrence of FBI lawlessness.

Political Trials

The trial of the Camden 28 for draft-card destruction and related offenses has resulted in the acquittal of seventeen. Ten of the twenty-eight were "severed" from the trial; their cases will probably now be dismissed. One pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor. Thus ends a political show trial, American style, which, it would be well to note, is in sharp contrast to the way in which show trials end under totalitarian regimes.

This trial was remarkable not only for that demonstration but for several reasons which are sure to resound in American jurisprudence. Federal Judge Clarkson S. Fisher provided a set of instructions that would be difficult to match for forensic logic.

The judge made it clear that the ordinary laws against breaking and entering—which the defendants not only admitted they had violated but were eager to explain as to motivation and background—could not be "nullified" by the jury simply because they might agree with the defendants about the Indochinese war. The defense of entrapment, he explained, applies only when informers or agents have implanted the criminal design in the mind of the defendant. This was not the case here: the defendants planned to break into the federal building in Camden to destroy draft records, and were deterred only by their lack of experience in burglarization. But then along came Robert W. Hardy, a building contractor, who supplied not only expertise but also tools for breaking and entering. With his encouragement, they revived the project, broke in—and found eighty FBI agents waiting for them.

Judge Fisher, however, constricted the limits of government license by charging the jury that if it found that the government had gone to "intolerable" lengths, "offensive to the basic standards of decency and shocking to the universal sense of justice," they were free to decide accordingly, and it was their own sense of decency and justice that would be decisive. There is a certain irony in the fact that this enlightened interpretation of the law came from a judge appointed by President Nixon.

The contractor-informer received $7,500 from the FBI for services and expenses, but his motives do not appear to have been predominantly mercenary. Moreover, he was double-crossed by the FBI while he was double-crossing

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the defendants. He was rather friendly with some of the accused and was assured by his FBI contacts that the defendants would receive only light sentences if convicted, or be put on probation. By the time he learned that the FBI was not leveling with him, he was enmeshed himself. Michael Ryman, one of two agents to whom he reported, told him that "someone in the little White House in San Clemente" wanted the crime to be consummated to put a crimp in anti-war propaganda.

Still another interesting circumstance is that the trial was a kind of free-for-all. The defendants were an articulate lot and the judge permitted each to represent himself or herself, and that they did. In addition, they were professionally backed by three able attorneys—David Kairys of Philadelphia, Carl Broege of Newark, and Martin Solar of New York. The three counsel and the seventeen defendants were permitted to cross-examine witnesses and to sum up to the jury. The judge felt that, since motivation was a key factor, the defendants should have latitude in explaining their feelings and actions.

The trial was in contrast to proceedings in the Chicago 7 case, where both the judge and the defendants behaved disgracefully. The Camden case, aside from its outcome, supports the conclusions reached by Prof. Francis A. Allen of the University of Michigan in the prestigious Oliver Wendell Holmes Lectures at Harvard University. An authority on criminal law, Professor Allen, having studied the Chicago 7 trial and the trials of Dr. Benjamin Spock and Angela Davis, concluded that in many instances "the political prosecution is, or may be seen to be, an avenue to achieve certain immediate political or governmental purposes, even when such action may threaten longer-term interests and values. It is this characteristic that renders the prosecution of political crimes particularly susceptible to unwise and even abusive uses."

Professor Allen spoke several months before the outcome at Camden, but from his exposition and Judge Fisher's forensic management, thoughtful judges and lawyers can profit in future political prosecutions.

What It Was

Political invective runs heavily to epithets—the stigmatizing of any view with which one disagrees with a term everyone agrees is disreputable. In the post-Hitler years, the extreme Left, which is given to assassination by nomenclature, clobbered its opponents with the term "Fascist" to the point that more discriminating commentators almost banned the word from their vocabularies. That is a pity, for the word describes something real and far from dead.

The usual complaint, when someone cries "fascism," is that the analogy is strained, if not utterly false. Too often that has been true, and indeed analogies are rarely if ever exact in the real world of politics: history is a stream, not a wheel. But consider what "fascism" means: it is the seizing and holding of power, not by revolutionary overthrow of a regime but by the subversion of a country's institutions through corruption and stealth. It kindles public rage against scapegoats, it pillories dissenters, it demands blind faith in the leader, and subordinates the welfare of the citizenry to the ambitions of the state.

From 1940 to 1946, F. J. Rarig was a special assistant to the Attorney General of the United States. In a letter to *The New York Times* (May 17) he describes the complex of events now embraced by the term "Watergate" as the "subversion of our election process, of freedom of the press and of due process of law . . . through systematic abuse of executive power." That sounds very much like a definition of fascism, and if "Watergate" had succeeded—if the conspirators had remained hidden and the press had kept mum and the courts had done as they were told and the money had not been traced to its sources—the result could very well have been fascism.

Invective should indeed be used with discrimination: if all Fascists are scoundrels, not all scoundrels are Fascists. But though Henry Ford stated the contrary, history is not bunk. We had a narrow escape and we do ourselves no service by pretending not to know what the danger was.

AROUND THE NATION

Portland: Watergate and Taxes

Oregon and its distinguished Republican Governor, Tom McCall, may in a sense be considered the first of many morale casualties of Watergate. Not directly, but indirectly. On May 1, Oregon's voters faced a statewide referendum proposing a remarkable plan for reforming the property-tied school tax. It was backed to the hilt by Governor McCall, who stumped the state for it, risking his popularity and political future.

This daring measure shifted support of public schools from property taxes to state income taxes. The proposal also provided for a drastic cut in property taxes for homeowners whose incomes were less than $15,000. A business profits tax and increased corporate income taxes were part of the proposal. Landowning corporations, if the land was in Oregon, received tax relief, with higher taxes falling on absentee firms who operate heavily in the state. The referendum provided for more equitable distribution of money among school districts, with the poorer districts being raised to a basic level of $900 per student.

Essentially, the new plan recognized the advantages in today's society of income over property, especially residential property, as an equitable tax base. Thousands of older couples living on fixed pensions own their homes and chattels, and that's about all. Inflation and annual school tax escalations are turning such people into serfs.

The new proposal inevitably raised a clamor that local school control would be lost. But this was met by a provision insuring local school board control as a matter of public policy. Actually, state education boards exercise more control than is realized.

All in all, the complex measure was drastic, new, and offered little time for study. The Oregon legislature remained in session, waiting in the wings. A Yes vote would make their agenda easier; a No vote would send them back to the tax crisis drawing boards.

Support for "the Governor's tax plan," as it came to be

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known, soon blossomed out in most of the major press and television areas. The AFL-CIO, the Teamsters, the Oregon Farm Bureau, the state Grange, the League of Women Voters, the Oregon Education Association, most school boards, many Republicans and most Democratic legislators, led by Jason Boe, the House Speaker, and even Oregon's tiny but widely read counter-culture monthly, the *Oregon Times*—all pushed hard for the measure. Portland's young Mayor Goldschmidt was all for it. "This plan finally makes the wealthy pull their load," the Teamsters inevitably put it. "This plan means money in the pocket of everyone earning less than $16,000 a year."

Opposing the plan were hastily formed groups of conservatives. "Legislators for Responsible Tax Relief" was a large bipartisan group headed by state Sen. Vern Cook. There was a "Concerned Group of Oregon Jobholders" with one front name and a "Vote No on May 1 Committee" with five. Associated Oregon Industries was potent behind the scenes.

"There is no Santa Claus," said the Vote No Committee. "You're playing Russian roulette with the safety of this great state. Quality education is penalized. . . . Why subsidize your neighbor?"

Two days before the vote, full-page ads, prime-time TV spots and leaflet drops rocketed from the Vote No Committee and the Concerned Group. The editorial pages, second-string media space and time, and the determined Governor fought for the tax measure.

The publicity overkill turned out to be unnecessary, because the front pages of the newspapers carried the news of Watergate: Kleindienst, Ehrlichman, Haldeman, Dean; FBI shifts and the startling transfer of new Defense Secretary Richardson to be Attorney General. Nixon's Checkers II speech reassured only the credulous. And out there, silent, were the people.

On a sunny May Day the voters sped to the polls and overwhelmingly rejected their fairest tax relief proposal. Every county but three voted it down.

"Voter mistrust of the political process has been fanned into a white-hot flame," House Speaker Boe said. Senator Cook, the victor, unwittingly expressed a deeper trend. "The voters recognize that it [the tax plan] was more than any honest person could expect."

The defeat leaves Governor McCall, one of the most popular and statesmanlike in Oregon's history, with nowhere to go. Republican moguls are cold. The Democratic invitation for him to switch parties now lacks gusto. He cannot succeed himself in office and, in his 60s, he may hesitate to challenge upsurging U.S. Senator Packwood in the next election. McCall, tired and thoughtful, flew off for an official visit to Israel. He was scarcely in the sky before Clay Myers, his diminutive Secretary of State, was sentimentally presented as "persuading" the despondent McCall not to resign. Myers, to the consternation of many Oregonians, wants to be governor.

Meanwhile, Oregon's public schools remain under threat of fiscal starvation. With thousands of school levy elections scheduled throughout the country, one wonders what the Watergate-stunned public will do to *any* ballot measure that mentions money or promises anything. Will voters stay away, or seize a crayon and find any ballot square that says No?

THOMAS E. GADDIS

San Francisco: Land Reform

If not yet a national movement, the concern over rural land reform in the United States moved onto a decidedly larger stage with the recent San Francisco conference on the subject (April 25-28). Sponsored by more than twenty agencies, but chiefly by the National Coalition for Land Reform, it reflected the growing alarm over the economic, marketing and tax structures which are moving people off the land and replacing them with corporations. The conference drew representation from forty states; some 400 were in attendance, whereas barely 150 had been anticipated. "Land is a precious and finite resource . . ." said the conference summation. "Its ownership and control in the United States, and the associated economic and political power, must be widely distributed."

Claiming to be the first attempt to organize concern over the patterns which are concentrating land ownership in the United States into ever fewer hands, the meeting called for specific laws to strengthen the family farm, curb corporate takeover in agriculture and enlist labor, environmentalists, small businessmen, minorities and consumers into an alliance with farmers. Its sessions were directed to the implications in farm statistics, which show that nearly 2,000 family farms go out of business every week; that the wealthiest 7 per cent of farms get 40 per cent of crop subsidies; that 800,000 farm workers expect to be displaced by machines in the next three years; that tax structures encourage the wealthy to dabble in farming for a tax write-off, in competition with legitimate farmers.

The issue of land ownership cannot be separated from questions of taxation, of subsidy and of energy development. Strong arguments were made for taxation to reclaim for society some of the unearned increment in land value which has occurred on large holdings merely by the growth and concentration of population. Many proposals were offered that such taxes be funneled into a public fund to buy back excessive landholdings for various public purposes, such as parks, greenbelts and open space, or as insurance for the continuation of farming in the future.

Former U.S. Sen. Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma, one of the major figures behind the coalition, spoke at the session. His "New Populism" is clearly a force behind the groping to define an approach that would turn governmental policies around in such a way as to protect the family farm. His emphasis is on the need to redistribute wealth in conjunction with desirable land reforms, an approach he claims is inevitably taken by anyone who today asks serious questions about the causes of meat price increases or environmental pollution.

At this conference for the first time Californians and Midwesterners heard of the successful controls over land use in Vermont and of zoning in Hawaii and of the rising hostility to the corporate dominance of the potato fields and timberlands of Maine. Montanans, worried over the effect of large resort developments on landholdings of the Burlington Northern railroad, heard of measures tried in Arizona and of parallel problems in New Mexico; at the same time, they exchanged strip-mining information with speakers from Appalachia and Pennsylvania. North Dakota's prohibitions against farm ownership by corporations (the statute dates back to depression days) were

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heartening precedent for those eager to see Congress adopt such a position. The broad representation at the conference is suggested by a few of the participants: Robert S. Browne, of the Black Economic Research Center, New York; José Angel Gutierrez, of Raza Unida Party, Crystal City, Tex.; Lawrence Hewes, of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara; Anne Bartley, Rural Resources Institute, Little Rock; Randall Torgerson, University of Missouri; Mike McCloskey, executive director, Sierra Club and Grace Thorpe, of Return Lands to the Indians.

The session generated wider understanding of and support for bills, now in Congress, which would place obstacles in the way of corporate farming; it noted especially the Family Farm Act sponsored by Sen. Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin and Sen. James Abourezk of South Dakota. It strongly opposed strip mining. It dwelt at length on indices suggesting that corporate farming is, as Senator Harris put it, only "more efficient at farming Washington." It exposed reports that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has understated the extent of conglomerate intrusion into agriculture and the implications of such dominance.

But the most important thing the conference did was bring together so many people who perceive that the American people are rapidly losing their relationship to the land. The scope of attendance and its concern for hard facts dealing with economics and taxation suggest a core of interest which will ultimately reach the politicians.

As the Rev. James L. Vizzard, S.J., Washington representative for the United Farm Workers, put it: "It is gratifying to some of us who are old war horses in the concern over land policies, to see intelligent, diligent young people responding to this immensely serious cause. There may be a certain degree of naïveté and idealism here, but you must have idealism to fuel any movement of significance. This amounts to the strongest call in years for a basic shift in governmental policies to protect the land."

MARY ELLEN LEARY

Chicago: Shell's Game

That endangered species, the old-fashioned ice cream parlor, almost became extinct in Chicago, due to the determined stalking of a mighty hunter, the Shell Oil Co. Scouting around for new gas station sites, Shell decided that the intersection of Pulaski and Irving Park was a promising one, because the westbound entrance to the Kennedy Expressway is just two blocks away. So Shell bought the corner property, and hired a demolition firm to remove the old buildings. No one bothered to tell the shopkeepers who leased those buildings, but someone read about the demolition contract in a real estate journal.

One of the endangered stores was the Buffalo Ice Cream Parlor, still as popular a neighborhood gathering place as it was when it was first established at that site in 1918. The original owner, a Greek immigrant, had started the ice cream parlor years before, at another location, and called it the Buffalo in honor of the first city he came to know after arriving in this country. The Buffalo has maintained its original décor, made its own ice cream, and developed a reputation far outside the neighborhood.

Mike Royko, breaking the story in the Chicago *Daily News*, noted that two gas stations already occupied the intersection, and added: "We only have about 2,000 gas stations in Chicago. Some parts of town, you can drive as much as three blocks without seeing one." Among the incensed citizens was Mrs. Pat Nelson, who lamented the apparent extinction of the Buffalo: "It's a piece of everyone's childhood. It's the place where you went with your Dad on Sunday morning or where you were taken for your first date. That's why it was such a shock to hear it's going to be torn down." Thirteen-year-old David Kedney observed: "My friends and I come here all the time, particularly in the summer. We usually stop on the way from the hobby shop or the library."

Prospects for saving the Buffalo looked bleak. Even the neighborhood's man in city hall, Alderman Anthony Laurino, was pessimistic: "Sure, it's a goddamn shame. I love the place. I've been going there since I was just a kid. Three gas stations at one intersection is ridiculous. But there's nothing we can do. Shell now has the property. It's zoned so that they can put up a station."

Shell remained unmoved. One of its first executives to be queried suggested that Shell might put up a statue of a buffalo by the new gas station. The North River Commission spearheaded protests with a rally to save the Buffalo. Hundreds of kids and parents attended, and Shell credit cards were reportedly burned. A meeting with Shell executives was fruitless. Pete Nichols and Tom Amarantos, present owners of the Buffalo, thought about moving the parlor out to Morton Grove. Countered Royko: "Somehow it doesn't seem right to have to go to a suburb to visit a Chicago landmark." Then the owners realized they couldn't afford the move. Of the other shopkeepers, Frank Peterson planned to keep his TV repair shop in the neighborhood, a few blocks away, but Charlie Moy decided he would have to close his laundry on the site where a Chinese hand laundry has flourished for fifty years, almost as long as the Buffalo.

Even though the outcry waned, the Shell Oil Co. was not exactly Chicago's sweetheart. Some recalled a TV commercial, showing a ladies' garden club in a Florida town, working closely with a new Shell station to preserve the natural beauty of the surroundings; Shell really cares about the integrity of your neighborhood, suggested the commercial. On a local level, hardly ever has a corporate image been so shattered as Shell's in Chicago.

During this time, though, Shell was evidently not as insensitive as it seemed. Alderman Laurino has continued to badger the company locally, and his son, state Rep. William Laurino, went after Shell in Springfield. According to one report, Shell decided to let the Buffalo remain through the summer, but the property owner balked, even though his rent would have doubled. After some further sputtering negotiations, Alderman Laurino recently announced that Shell and the owner have agreed to the summer reprieve. As people rejoice in the temporary saving of the Buffalo, its owners may be able to earn enough during the summer to consider that move to Morton Grove, and possibly another location. The Buffalo will not become extinct, although it may have to graze on other grounds. Big money still talks in Chicago, but it can be made to stumble a bit when it tries to mess around with the neighborhood.

JEROME LANDFIELD

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WATERGATE: A Brush With Tyranny

RAMSEY CLARK

Watergate is more than a sordid affair; it exposes a set of values. Values permeate conduct and, beyond the vast domain of chance and necessity which chiefly determine our fate, are the principal factors in the exercise of free will.

The values manifested by Watergate are many: power above law; ends above means; deception above truth; self-interest above public service. The central assumption is that the world is divided into good people and bad people. The good people may, under varying circumstances, be all Americans, all Republicans, all persons in the Administration, all on the White House staff, or in the Department of Justice, all within a particular clique, the President, you and me, or finally only me. The values justify bombing in Cambodia, bugging the Watergate, or causing a special investigation of Daniel Ellsberg.

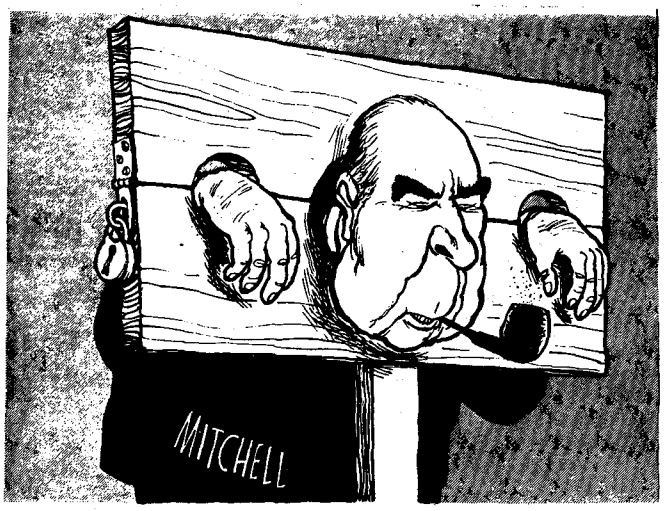
In his speech of April 30 on Watergate, President Nixon said, ". . . like any other calling, politics has good people and bad people." He described Mr. Ehrlichman and Mr. Haldeman as ". . . two of the finest public servants it has been my privilege to know." Of Watergate, he asked, "How could it have happened?" Because these good people, ". . . whose zeal exceeded their judgment . . . may have done wrong in a cause they deeply believed to be right." By this explanation, the good people are still right, just imprudent.

What then of the rule of law? How can it hope to achieve freedom, justice, equality, peace? The rule of law applies alike to friend and foe, rich and poor, loved and hated, feared and trusted. Under a value system that divides nations and societies into good and bad, law and government are simply means of power to be used to further the interests of the "good" people, to control the "bad" people.

This value system has tended to guide the Nixon Administration in all its activities. There need be no legal justification for bombing in Cambodia. Lon Nol today is among the good people, so for the present it is in our interest to bomb his fellow citizens to protect him. A civilized world with a rule of law would call that murder.

The result is to politicize the conduct of government and the use of law. A politicized law is will, not law. Law and government are then used for the political ends of those who wield their power. At the end of this road lies tyranny. To analyze the phenomena adequately, you must look at both what is said and what is done.

While illustrations abound throughout the executive branch, and into regulatory agencies and such independent activities as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Department of Justice offers the prime example. Here is the seat of law in the executive branch: its name, and presumably its purpose, is justice; equal justice under law. President Nixon has staffed the Department of Justice with



Oliphant (Denver Post)

politicians: Mitchell, Kleindienst, Wilson, Gray, Leonard, Ruckelshaus, Frizell, Mardian, Rehnquist, Kashiwa. Six had previously sought election to or served in statewide political office. Elliot Richardson, just confirmed as Attorney General, makes the seventh of eleven. Politicians can make extraordinary contributions to law and government even in the management of the bureaucracy. But when professional legal discipline is infected by political consideration, we are a government of men, not laws. When politicians are placed in key legal positions, the appearance of infection is immediate and the probability of its actuality high. No Presidential appointee at Justice during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had sought or served in elective office. As a matter of policy, men known primarily as lawyers, not as politicians, were chosen for lawyers' jobs.

Political people have brought political judgments to the Department of Justice under President Nixon. In crime control, civil rights enforcement and First Amendment areas, among others, the department took political actions.

President Nixon espouses wiretapping. For the first time in history an Attorney General, John Mitchell, contended for an inherent power in the President to tap without Congressional or judicial approval in domestic security cases. This view was later rejected by the U.S. Supreme Court but we do not yet know who was tapped as a result. Mr. Nixon's first assistant attorney general for the Criminal Division, Will Wilson, took a hard political line on law enforcement, but resigned under a cloud. He had been the private attorney for a man under federal investigation for fraud from whom he borrowed tens of thousands of dollars after becoming Chief Prosecutor of the United States. Mr. Wilson signed a check payable to a private investigator indicted for wiretapping—the bad person tapped was a federal bank examiner, assigned to investigate Mr. Wilson's client. Attorney General Mitchell met in his office in the Department of Justice with political campaign officials, listened to suggestions that the Demo-

Ramsey Clark was Attorney General of the United States in the Johnson administration.

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cratic National Committee be wiretapped—a federal crime—and never admonished them of the law, or threatened prosecution. (At least, John Ehrlichman, also a lawyer, when told, he says, of the burglarizing of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's files—a crime—said, "Don't do it again.")

To demonstrate strong commitment to tough law enforcement, the first Nixon Chief Marshal of the United States was recruited from the military; he was Provost Marshal Gen. Carl Turner. The Chief Marshal is the highest civilian law-enforcement officer in the federal establishment, just as the Attorney General is the ranking lawyer and the director of the FBI heads the major investigative office. The Provost Marshal General commands the Military Police of the United States, numbering several hundred thousand. A paramilitary concept of civilian police is foreign to the spirit of a free, democratic society. General Turner was soon to be behind prison bars for stealing guns forfeited by persons apprehended by U.S. Marshals. General Turner appropriated the guns for good people, his personal collection and his bank account, ironically paralleling the Administration's view of gun control; take them from bad people, give them to good people.

Soon the Administration's value patterns emerged. While abandoning social programs promising relief from poverty, legal services for the poor and the quest for equal justice, government acted to keep people in their place, to make them behave. "Law and order" meant control by force. Tough cops meant bully power.

Sometimes the philosophy claimed was "strict construction," but neither acts nor words could meet this test. A more sweeping and unfounded claim of executive privilege has never been expounded than that espoused by Attorney General Kleindienst. The privilege could pull the curtain of secrecy over all executive activity.

No Justice on the Supreme Court appointed by President Nixon has agreed with Justice Black's strict construction of the First Amendment. Black believed that because the Amendment provided "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom . . . of the press . . . ," Congress could make no law abridging freedom of the press.

Invoking the symbolism of the death penalty, preventive detention and a no-knock law, while attacking Supreme Court rulings enforcing the rights of defendants, the Department of Justice slowly abandoned, then opposed, enforcement of the equal protection clause. In October 1969, when young attorneys in the Civil Rights Division began the first employee protest in the department's history over the failure to enforce the law, some resigning, Atty. Gen. John Mitchell said, "I couldn't care less." In a major case involving school desegregation in Mississippi in 1970, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, using unprecedented language, referred to the "obtuse, patronizing failure" of the department to "do its duty." And when the department failed to enforce a court order it had sought requiring removal of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War from the Capitol grounds in Washington, Judge George L. Hart said in open court to Asst. Atty. Gen. L. Patrick Gray, you have "degraded the court."

The President followed the standard by politicizing the Calley trial, telling the world and the military courts he would be the final judge. A brave young army prosecutor, Capt. Aubrey Daniel, stood up for the rule of law and criticized his Commander in Chief for demeaning it.

By political actions, the Administration reassured the good people, supporting the largest, most lawless sweep arrests in our history—those of 7,000 persons protesting the war in Vietnam in May 1971. The Department of Justice protected the good people who acted violently in its interest by refusing to convene a grand jury to investigate the deaths of students at Kent State. Following a police raid on the Black Panthers in Chicago in 1969, the Department of Justice first promised a private commission of inquiry that indictments would be returned, itself an improper act, then released a grand jury report which Sen. John L. McClellan criticized as without authority in law. The report blamed everyone, but indicted no one in the death of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark and the wounding of four Black Panthers in the Chicago police raid. FBI ballistics found that one shot, at most, had been fired by Panthers, while scores were fired by police.

In the operation of the Department of Justice, numerous political and lawless acts have come to light. U.S. Attorney Stewart, in San Diego, interfered with a grand jury that was investigating a major Nixon contributor who supported Stewart for a judgeship. Deputy Attorney General Kleindienst sat in his office and listened while the administrative assistant to a Republican Senator pleaded for a constituent and suggested a large political contribution. Kleindienst did nothing, saying later that he did not recognize the conduct as an attempt to bribe. The person was later convicted of attempting to bribe Mr. Kleindienst in that very meeting. ITT officials held private conversations, unscheduled and outside the presence of staff attorneys working on ITT cases, with Attorney General Mitchell and Deputy Attorney General Kleindienst.

James R. Hoffa was granted parole swiftly and separately by a law-and-order Administration that did not pretend to give equal consideration to other applications. (One might ask what lesson tens of thousands of offenders take from this single act.) Attorney General Mitchell directly interceded in a matter for Robert Vesco, then under investigation. Vesco gave $200,000 as a political contribution, later returned.

L. Patrick Gray became the second head of a federal bureau that had never had an agent charged with corruption in office. As acting director of the FBI, he accepted, and destroyed without reading, he says, a file that might have contained evidence of crime. Agents in a new federal drug agency that was set up in the Department of Justice for political visibility—thus destroying morale among professionals in career service enforcement of laws controlling dangerous drugs—without obtaining search warrants required by the Fourth Amendment or facts to support their actions, smashed into private homes in Illinois, terrorized the families, threatened death, used force, destroyed property—and found nothing.

For the first time in history the U.S. Government, acting through the Department of Justice, sought to restrain a free press prior to publication, and a federal grand jury

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sought to force a newspaper reporter to appear before it bringing notes and answering questions about his sources. The illustrations already known seem endless. How many more are yet to come to light?

We should concede, with Felix Cohen, that "for most judges, for most lawyers, for most human beings, we are as unconscious of our value patterns as we are of the oxygen that we breathe." Perhaps those involved in Watergate fall into the majority who are unconscious of their value patterns. But the patterns are clear. They are lawless, truthless and violent values that seek to seize power, to curb opposition, to have their way. They are the values of Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States.

We should strive for a leadership guided by a philosophy that stands for something decent, that is passionately devoted to the quest for truth, realizing that only if we see the truth can we in time overcome the problems. There is a desperate need for reaffirmation of the American ideals of Freedom, Equality and Justice. But these things will not be possible in a society whose government leaders hold law in contempt. We must, in the words of a 29-year-old Abraham Lincoln, make reverence for law "the political religion of the nation." □

THE ACADEMIC LEFT

WEST GERMANY'S NEW SCAPEGOAT

ROBERT WULIGER

Marburg, West Germany

Fascism watchers here in West Germany, now that the extreme nationalist NPD has enfolded itself within the Christian Democratic Union, have their eyes on a new phenomenon: the exclusion of Marxist teachers from universities and lower schools. Minister-presidents of the ten states that comprise the Federal Republic decided in January 1972 that an informal blackball of teaching candidates from among the more aggressive Socialist groups would be their best weapon against rapidly increasing successes by the Left in the world of West German education. Spartakus, the student arm of the West German Communist Party, has managed since its inception in 1969 to capture many teaching and administrative posts in West German universities. A Marxist minority of, say, 2 per cent of students, aided by an urgent need for change in class-dominated, traditionalistic West German university structures, has acquired power and influence far out of proportion to its size. But the hue and cry from an outraged and outfoxed conservative opposition is just as much out of proportion. It seems preposterous to fear that some 10,000 Marxist students of all shades and colors, banded together more by enthusiasm and idealism than by hard party discipline, are going to revolutionize a land as inherently petit bourgeois as West Germany.

Nevertheless, Marxist teachers (as well as lawyers) are to be excluded from public life, on the ground that their activities are not harmonious with the democratic structure of the postwar federal constitution. That the exclusion is itself as discordant with the same constitution appears not to upset the administrative mind. While the insolubility of the classic liberal dilemma over freedom and organization may be driving academicians to slander actions and nervous breakdowns, administrators are in business to answer and not to attenuate political questions. In this case, the minister-presidents were motivated, first, by a philosophic skepticism about the gap between have-not (especially East German) Marxist theory and practice and, second, by a practical imperative to stick with the haves—at least as long as they have it.

Regardless of whatever global currents move student political action, there is plenty of immediate cause to explain the undoubted success of Communist and Left Socialist campus politics since the return of the prodigal Communist Party to political respectability in 1968. Although the twelve years of prison, exile and security-organization harassment between 1956 and 1968 had undoubtedly wound up far Left energies tight, stored tension alone cannot account for the Marxist triumph. Indignant moderates and worried conservatives could do worse than look beyond the fog of metaphysics without which no German controversy—even a haggle over the price of a used car—can be undertaken. Right and Center political incapacity has produced ample bread-and-butter grievances for the Left to exploit. For example, housing. Among interest blocs in booming, resurgent and inflationary West Germany, students in particular feel the grip of the landlord. With dormitories in short supply, and with funds for enlarging them even shorter, owners of buildings in university towns have displayed a greed, rapacity, bullying and arrogance that give some of the more outdated 19th-century polemics of Marx and Engels real contemporary meaning. The West German landlord is the direct heir to that tradition of serfdom, sharecropping and narrow monopoly which seems to linger almost in the germ plasm of a people not at all spiritually unfettered from feudalism. Student agitprop, then, finds full resonance in the shared feeling against the common enemy, just as it hits a target as big as the side of a barn in the conditions of universities themselves: overcrowded classes, insufficient teaching staff, curricula that should have gone out with button shoes, and harried vested academic interests which cannot meet the challenge of either the burgeoning enrollments in, or the rapidly changing social composition of, West German universities.

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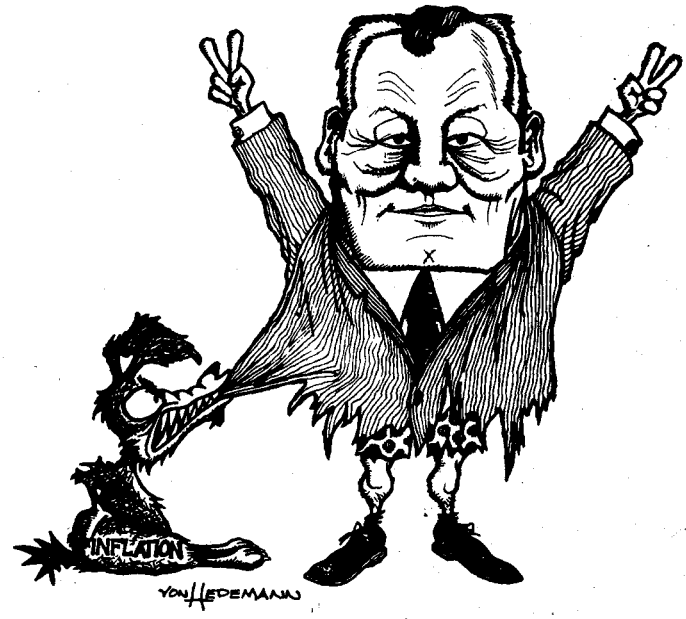
All of this enriches the soil in which propaganda can flourish. But propaganda and political action to create a fairer school system, broader social opportunities and decent housing arrangements are hardly revolutionary. What, then, are the real reasons behind the denial of constitutional freedoms to legitimate, constitutionally based political organizations?

One reason, of course, is exasperation. Spartakus, which is well disciplined, has unfortunately been tarred by some of the press with the brush of the 1967-69 APO (extra-parliamentary opposition) movement, whose wild tactics produced riots, academic psychoses and even a student martyr. In addition, splinter groups like the Maoist KSV, KSB and KSG (which some Spartakus students believe to be *agents provocateurs*) are not differentiated by the public from their more sedate and rational neighbor. To the irritated man on the street, one bearded student looks pretty much like another.

Another reason for hounding Communists, along with some Socialists, out of jobs and for blocking new appointments is the hope of politicians, especially in the SPD, that "realistic" young people will confine their politics to channels less embarrassing to the slight SPD majority. Most Social Democrats are content with their paradigm of a tax-manipulated, neo-Keynesian, conventional bourgeois society, safe within the warm embrace of the American politics that gave it birth. To have a dedicated and energetic minority of young people in academic posts and classrooms proclaiming and trying to prove that the current arrangements are doomed by "the contradictions of capitalism" perturbs many of the leading elderly gentlemen and young ladder climbers in the SPD. They just don't want to be moved leftward, so that the CDU can take over their middle-of-the-road voters, who are scared of ideas for limiting the privileges of private property or for confiscating speculative profits in land.

A third cause for unhappiness with Marxist teaching is that it wants a new deal in curricula. Academic disciplines and methods taken for granted in the United States and England must inch their way through the thickets of tradition and privilege in West German universities. For instance, it is a struggle to institute such courses as sociology of literature, social medicine, social causes of disease, comparative economic systems, sociology of jurisprudence, comparative political systems, social philosophy and societal language barriers, which aim at creating greater social opportunity and equality for the depressed classes. These students must fight for limited funds, not only against resistance by the old favorites but also against suspicions that the newer offerings are Trojan Horses being wheeled in to capture entire universities for Karl Marx. That seems a little far-fetched. Marburg, which is the Communist Party's most successful forward position in West Germany today, has about thirty Marxist teachers in a faculty of more than 1,200; and even these thirty fit under no one rubric. That they dominate political science and sociology, with a few Marxists in German literature or in education or in philosophy, means only that some 10 per cent of prospective high school or university teachers who pass through Marburg into public life will be about as much affected by what they learn as are students anywhere. Of the small percentage who retain



Willy Brandt

their beliefs through the academic obstacle course, how many will hold them in the wear and tear of parent-teacher groups, old-fashioned colleagues and school principals, and the compromises that go with making a living in any society, let alone this most middle class of societies?

The wedge of reaction against this imagined peril is thus far tiny: about 100 cases of denials of employment to high school teachers with Marxist affiliations, and ten to fifteen cases of exclusion of university professors. Nearly all the blackballed high school teachers are active trade unionists, with about seventy in the Communist Party, ten in the Left-SPD Young Socialists, and another twenty unaffiliated but actively Left. Meanwhile, if the security of the West German state is being disturbed by radical activity, it appears that Right-radicals are considered harmless. But that is a bias as old as Bismarck and as recent as Adenauer, who purged the Marxists from public life, but not old Nazis found in key positions in the civilian, military and security bureaucracies.

With the end of the rollback strategy and the beginning of a new West German political orientation toward the Socialist countries in 1968, the Communist Party was legalized and its detained members set free. That the *Bundesverfassungsschutz*—the West German FBI—is still busy collecting information on Marxist trade unionists, teachers, professors, student activists, et al., is generally understood. Student and academic informants, wiretaps, bugs and postal inspection are accepted as normal practice, just as it is accepted—although noticeably lamented—that some of the good guys in this refurbished script are the same good guys who, during the Weimar Republic and before, saved blonde, angelic Germania from the bad guys. The courts and administrative bodies are not as blatantly stacked as they were during Weimar; younger men trained in the reaction to Nazism and in the reform-spirited universities of the 1960s are critical and courageous, where their predecessors tended to be acquiescent and often actively cooperative with the Right. But the courts—both Marxist and liberal jurists complain—

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are now turning to legally dubious, *sub rosa* and outright unjust methods to sterilize the activities of Marxist, liberal and critical public employees, particularly teachers and professors. Academicians, writers like Heinrich Böll, jurists and theologians such as Prof. Helmut Gollwitzer are the active leaders of the campaign to prevent extralegal sanctions against teachers from finding their way into the social fabric of a people whose memories of the liabilities of political vigilantism are only too fresh.

As for the blackballed prospective teachers, some—with the support of the Union of Educators and Scientists—have gone to court, and the pattern of decisions reflects the socio-political outlooks of the judges, ranging from liberal in Hesse and Lower Saxony to conservative in Schleswig-Holstein and Bavaria. Since the president of the West German Supreme Court, Dr. Ernst Benda, was one of the originators of the emergency legislation of 1968, which was fought bitterly by liberals and leftists, there is considerable skepticism about the possibilities for appellate relief from decisions against Marxist teachers. But local politics has managed to win contested teaching posts for some of them, especially in areas where student action is well organized.

Signs of a mass movement that could support another round of German fascism? There seem to be none. But Marxists argue otherwise: inflation is eating away incomes, especially of the lower-paid workers; social needs are pressing thin national, state and municipal budgets to the straining point; conservative financial and commercial policies must curtail the boom, to save the capitalist structure; when the economy reverses into downswing, a generation of West Germans raised on "economic miracle" and unbounded faith in the future is going to resent bread lines and doles; "the contradictions of capitalism" will resolve into active, physical class struggle; in anticipation of the problems of winding down the inflated, asymptotic current prosperity, big money, obviously, will be well prepared to cope with protests; hence, the minuscule action against Marxist teachers is not merely a symptom of executive annoyance or of big-party rivalries but the beachhead for active policies to save a social system in great jeopardy.

"It was not Hitler who built fascism," says Prof. Dr. Reinhard Kühnl, Marburg political scientist and authority on fascism. "It was fascism that built Hitler. When capitalism has its back to the wall again, then it will find another leadership. As for the cadres and their officers and followers, there will be no scarcity of personnel or enthusiasm. The only safeguard against a resurgence of fascism in Germany or elsewhere, but perhaps especially here with us because of our collective past, is a sane, democratic socialism, that will produce and distribute goods and services for the use of producers and not for the profit machine of vested interests and privilege." □

DOWNWARD THE DOLLAR

GOLD, GREED AND CONFUSION

V. LEWIS BASSIE

In the two years ending in March the key currency system, which had kept exchange rates fixed against the dollar by government edict, sank to its untimely end. The last rites, without eulogies, took place at a meeting of the ministers of major industrial nations in Paris on March 16, when it was decided to let exchange rates between the dollar and other currencies float in accordance with supply and demand. Some of the participants were unhappy to let it go at that, but the situation was out of control and there was little else they could do. The end was untimely in that the nations had not prepared any new international monetary system to take the old system's place.

The second devaluation of the dollar on February 12 had been fatal to the key currency system. The blow was struck by a mass flight from the dollar into havens that promised to produce a profit on devaluation. In the first part of February, the central banks of the hard-currency countries, especially Germany and Japan, had to absorb more than $1 billion a day. These transfers were basically speculative, aimed at a quick profit from the adjustment of exchange rates or the rising price of gold. The volume was too great for the central banks of the hard-currency countries which were trying to maintain the structure of rates, and it threatened to accelerate. The devaluation was undertaken as a way to appease the speculative expectations of change.

Just fourteen months earlier, an agreement reached at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington had resulted in the first devaluation and an interim agreement on a new structure of exchange rates. It was hailed by President Nixon as "the most significant monetary agreement in history." That devaluation of 8.6 per cent (from $35 to $38 per ounce of gold) had also been forced by alarming floods of international hot money. Serious loss of confidence in the dollar as the world's monetary standard showed up as recovery from the recession of 1970 got under way. The U.S. merchandise trade balance shifted from surplus to deficit in April 1971, and outflows of both liquid and long-term capital accelerated sharply to make the 1971 payments deficits tremendous. The deficit on current account and long-term capital was more than $9 billion, deteriorating by $6 billion from 1970; the net liquidity deficit went to $22 billion, increasing by $18 billion; and the official reserve transactions deficit was $30 billion, rising by $20 billion. In the spring of 1971,

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it appeared that anybody with dollars could profit by selling them then and buying them back after devaluation. Many people had dollars, especially the international banks and their clients, and these were transferred to speculative use in the gold and currency markets.

For more than a decade the United States had been firmly declaring that it would never devalue. It maintained this pledge through the initial emergency of March 1968, after the Tet offensive had exposed the country's weak position in Vietnam. The compromise then set up was a two-tier system for pricing gold, which in effect turned gold over to the speculative private market but lacked the fortitude to take it out of the monetary sphere entirely. Then in August 1971 the key currency system broke down with announcement of the Nixon New Economic Policy; it died finally in March of this year.

Statements by officials of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other countries held the second devaluation to be "constructive." U.S. officials stated that the two devaluations were "needed" and that they "have done the necessary job." The holders of dollars did not believe either group and went looking for further gains. The currency exchanges were closed from March 2 until March 19, when they opened with free floating. There is no current dispute about the need for floating. When there is no alternative, no standard against which to fix rates, everybody must accept the situation.

The various official statements, as well as the actions taken, reflect the sorry state of confusion in both theory and practice. It derives from the rapidity of change, from clinging to tradition or mythology, and from the prevalence of self-serving maneuvers for special advantage. There is much discussion of causes, but a great deal of it ignores the one obvious and direct cause—the overwhelming movements of liquid capital. Other causes are important as background, to explain how the U.S. balance of payments came to run large deficits, but they do not really explain the crises, and the traditional remedies based on them can no longer produce cures. When this one immediate and decisive cause exists, it is impossible to know the importance of others. So it has become primarily a problem of control—a particular aspect of the situation described in my article, "The Multinational Computer" (*The Nation*, February 5).

The Administration takes a simplistic view of the difficulty as originating in "market forces" and proposes to remedy it with a new program for promoting trade. Persistence in this approach has made some Europeans suspect that it is really a subterfuge for gaining trade advantages. No doubt official economists here regard that as absurd, but the way they cling to obsolete theories about the necessity for avoiding deficits by adjusting trade through relative price changes seems equally incomprehensible to Europeans.

Theorists who are enamored of free floating argue mostly on the basis of its superficial advantages. They want to let the speculators bet against one another rather than against governments that agree to hold rates fixed. Presumably this not only frees governments from a responsibility they cannot meet in any case but provides flexibility for future adjustments. What such experts cannot demonstrate is that this unrestrained flexibility will be of the kind needed to promote world progress.

Opponents of floating doubt that speculation really stabilizes or can produce rational solutions. The situation becomes similar to that of the stock market, where prices are determined by the way money talks. Speculation in the market may at times be stabilizing, but at other times is destabilizing, so that prices may speed to irrational extremes on the basis of nothing more solid than a spate of rumors. Also, market sentiment may create great disparities between one group of stocks and another, with price-earnings ratios in the one running to ten times those in the other. In the international field such extremes are most undesirable, but the idea that the "money-talks" way of setting values is better founded in the sphere of international money cannot be substantiated. Anyone who can believe that gold ought to be priced as high as $100 an ounce can be convinced of an array of other implausible notions.

The view that market forces should dominate goes back to the theory of comparative advantage, which explains why trade is advantageous where differences in relative efficiency come into play. This concept of market forces properly applies to merchandise trade and services, though it may also take into consideration real capital movements and other means of developing industry or natural resources. However, the various forms of liquid capital that make up the total of international hot money are something else, and temporary shifting of these balances does not necessarily accomplish anything worth while. The country that is in deficit because of such shifting does not necessarily have an overvalued currency, and the country that is piling up reserves does not necessarily have an undervalued currency. Calling such volatile capital flows as those that produced the crises of 1971 and 1973 "market forces" is absurd.

This is not to say that trade and other balance-of-payments items are irrelevant, for if there were no real imbalances, speculative expectations would not be aroused. The trade balance was adverse in 1972 by $6.4 billion, and no reversal was in sight. But expectations based on simple facts of that kind do not correspond to any underlying set of quantitative relationships. In any case, the contribution of trade to the total dollar outflow in the February crisis period was probably no more than 2 or 3 per cent. The speculative flight from the dollar, rather than any other aspect of the balance-of-payments disequilibrium, was the decisive cause of the crisis. About all that the 10 per cent devaluation immediately accomplished was to reward the speculators with $1 billion in profits and the gold hoarders with 10 per cent of their stocks. It fed the greed that created the problem, and stimulated the appetite for more.

This may readily be seen in the case of gold. Every price increase, however unrealistic the rumor on which it is based, intensifies the hope that there may be more where that profit came from. That kind of expectation has characterized every speculative commodity boom since the Dutch "tulip craze" of the 17th century.

Resorting to devaluation as a remedy implies that price differentials were the source of the difficulty. It seems

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likely that such differentials existed before the devaluation of 1971, but there is no continuing evidence that they have been important thereafter. More important in aggravating the deficits in the last few months has been the strong cyclical upsurge of buying in this country. People who had money or could obtain credit went on a spending spree that included imports. In such a situation, the deficits might be temporary and devaluation not really needed. Whether or not that is true, the devaluation operates on only one part of a complicated set of factors that go into making up the balance of payments as a whole. That one factor, trade adjustment, takes time, but speculators are impatient and when their operations control the situation the time required is not necessarily available.

Confusion about exchange rates goes back to the beginning of the key currency system, which was set up by the Bretton Woods Conference in 1945. The basic pattern of exchange rates was fixed in the late 1940s, when nobody much cared just where the rates were set, because there was hardly any fear of competition for trade. The United States alone came through the war with its industrial capacity undamaged and expanded, so that needed supplies of *industrial* products were not available elsewhere. In addition, this country held the bulk of the world's monetary gold. The decade of the dollar shortage, or "dollar gap" as it was called, was just beginning. At the time the United States was completely willing to give up gold, and it assisted in the reconstruction of the war-torn industrial countries throughout the decade.

In 1960 came the first flurry of trouble. By then reconstruction abroad was relatively complete, the Common Market had been formed, U.S. liabilities had expanded beyond U.S. reserves, and most countries had gained enough reserves to permit convertibility of their currencies. There were indications even then that exchange rates needed adjustment, but most nations did not want them changed. Their choice was for higher reserves in preference to any loss of competitive advantage. The U.S. deficits did not seem important because prices were stable in the United States, but rising abroad, and the trends were so much in favor of the dollar during the early 1960s, except for Japan, that it seemed no other correction would be necessary. Not until the war-induced inflation of Vietnam took hold did the dollar's position begin to deteriorate seriously.

The 1960s was the decade of emerging crises. The pound fell first; it had to be bolstered with $1 billion of assistance in 1961, with $3 billion in 1965, and was devalued from $2.80 to $2.40 in 1968. In contrast, Germany, under pressure from other European countries, raised the value of the mark in 1961 and again in 1969. The Japanese yen, of concern mainly in relation to the dollar, was held steady through 1970, despite indications that it was even more undervalued than the mark. It was the great fault of the key currency system that it inhibited exchange-rate adjustments except in crisis conditions.

But the system, seriously flawed as it was, had the great advantage of freeing the world for a quarter of a century of unprecedented economic growth, with trade expansion leading the way. There were no financial obstacles, and after the end of reconstruction, foreign countries did not stop expanding but pushed ahead toward ever rising peaks of prosperity. The dollar deficits that were first created at least in part by reconstruction aid were increased by the growing competitive power achieved in other countries. Reserves grew too large in some countries, but considering trade and financial relationships more generally, dollar deficits were essential to give other countries the reserves they needed to carry on the expanding volume of business. Those deficits were held to an average of $3 billion a year through the 1960s, and governments had to absorb only a fifth as much. If the U.S. deficits had not been available, other countries would have had to incur deficits to balance the surpluses. Together with the almost consistent pursuit of policies for free trade, the deficits may be regarded as America's great contribution to economic progress during the key currency years.

Germany and Japan had been given another advantage besides favorable exchange rates. They were sheltered by the American military shield, and their resources were freed for economic development and the promotion of exports. The reasons for this were more political than economic. The United States wanted to build them up as bastions for containment of communism in the East and in the West. That is why America did not move against the undervaluation of the yen before the breaking point was reached in the dollar crisis of 1971.

Just where the exchange rates should stand now is a matter for conjecture. Since 1968 the mark and the yen have been lifted by roughly 40 per cent against the dollar, and most other major currencies are 10 to 30 per cent higher. These are very large changes. Perhaps it was necessary that the dollar depreciation should go far enough to reverse the structure of values that prevailed through the 1960s. In other words, creation of risks in the other direction may have been needed to stop the dollar outflows. Some well-informed economists, who have taken the trouble to look at trends in prices, wages, productivity and unit labor costs, now believe that the dollar is undervalued. If so, it is not unlikely that the U.S. trade surplus will reassert itself with the next cyclical letdown. This probability throws doubt on the wisdom of trying to fix exchange rates in the present position, so the floating may have to continue for a year or more.

The other governments were reluctant to revalue, lest that hurt their export industries. Under modern conditions of production and distribution, industry everywhere is concerned to keep its prices stable. It is common for concerns in this country to make their prices competitive, meaning as high as the other fellow's. Industrial operations that require high capital outlays accept price reductions only at the risk of wiping out profits. In entering foreign markets, everything from product design to sales outlets requires high investment of time and effort as well as money. Any forced reduction in prices through revaluation may involve losses of market shares or losses in profits, or both, and jobs as well as corporate incomes are at stake. So the governments of the successful exporting nations attempted to peg the

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dollar-exchange rates and were relatively successful until the flood of dollars overwhelmed them.

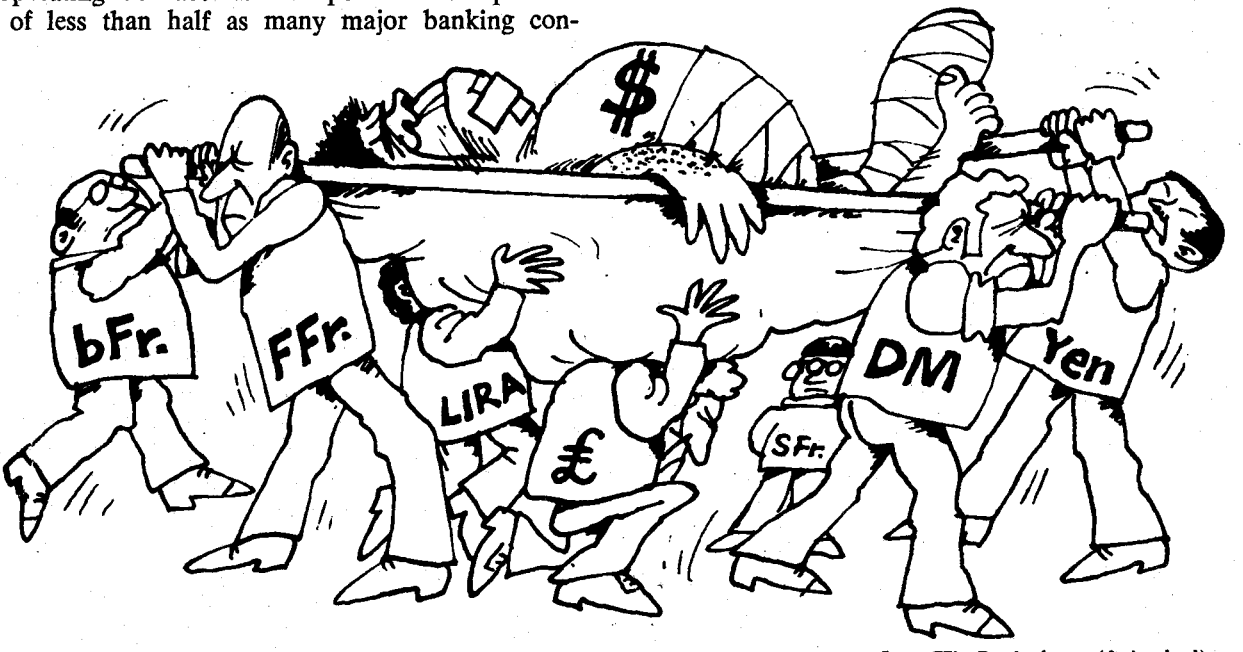
Two new factors that entered the picture in the 1960s became increasingly important as time went on. The first was the growth of the multinational corporations. This development was stimulated in the late 1950s by the formation of the European Common Market, since many large U.S. corporations wanted to get behind any tariff barriers it might throw up. They organized efficient productive units abroad by building new facilities or by taking over and revamping smaller European companies. They helped to transfer technology and know-how and raised productivity by installing specialized equipment and training manpower. Not only was the productivity gap eliminated; in many cases it was reversed by the development of these new, sophisticated units.

The second factor was the growth of the Eurodollar market. This market developed at first with transfers of dollars to be held in accounts with European banks, mostly branches of large U.S. banks. Lack of control over these deposits provided the basis for a new banking system, and this dollar banking system abroad, consisting of U.S. branches and commercial banks of the various countries, was able to create on its own initiative further expansion of the Eurodollar market. The total deposits in this market now exceed $80 billion. Nobody knows how much of this was transferred and how much was created by the Eurodollar banking system itself, but a good deal of the $80 billion falls into the category of international hot money. It has no definite investment outlet but moves expediently and settles wherever opportunities for a profit attract it.

Both the multinational corporations and the Eurodollar market contributed to the tremendous growth of the international financial sector. The large U.S. banks multiplied their branches in all parts of the world. Just twenty of these multinational banks handle nearly all of the transactions for American corporations and other clients operating abroad. In Europe their competition consists of less than half as many major banking consortia organized by agreements among large banks in the various countries to facilitate operations across national boarders. They have improved the speed with which any currency can be transferred, and this means that financial pressure can mount quickly, whether or not trade and jobs are immediately involved.

The destabilizing effects of the $80 billion Eurodollar market are multiplied during periods of crisis by other liquid capital transfers and by maneuvers in both commodity and financial markets designed to produce speculative profits. According to a recent study by the U.S. Tariff Commission, the U.S. multinational corporations held short-term liquid assets of $268 billion at the end of 1971, and this total grew in 1972. Moving only a fraction of this sum could easily precipitate a monetary crisis. The study absolves these corporations of "destructive, predatory motives." However, most of these corporations have to be concerned about potential exchange losses, and they regularly try to protect themselves against risks. Even a small minority is capable of generating speculative flows heavy enough to be disruptive.

The corporations that operate in both commodity and financial markets have many ways to avoid risks or insure profits. The sharp reversal from a merchandise trade surplus of $300 million in the first quarter of 1971 to a deficit of $1 billion in the second quarter was partly speculative, as imports were speeded and exports were delayed in anticipation of the devaluation. These firms can contract or invoice in one currency or another. They can to some extent stockpile supplies or make forward commitments where exchange rates seem likely to bring about price changes. Even aside from currency transactions, therefore, their foreign exchange positions could be substantially modified, and the changes could hardly be detected, let alone controlled. One executive admitted that although his firm's action "contained no element of speculation . . . it tended to add momentum to a develop-



Jusp; Wir Bruckenbauer (Switzerland)

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ment nobody wanted." Another stated, "We don't believe in gambling against the U.S. dollar, but with assets in Germany, England and Japan, we made a handsome profit."

The international banks are most sensitive to exchange conditions and typically have set up machinery whereby exchange risks are foreseen. Their usual policy is to hold foreign exchange positions to a minimum, and this propensity becomes acute at times when depreciation of holdings is threatened. One executive stated, "We took no action other than the normal steps which every prudent company takes in the face of monetary unrest. These are to try to reduce the risk of loss by adjusting short-term borrowing policies, by influencing the promptness of payments and receipts, by seeking to avoid the build-up of cash balances in currencies thought to be weak or large debts in those thought to be strong, and by taking out forward exchange cover where available and appropriate."

What may be even more important in the operations of the banks are their attempts to help clients who have exchange problems. They try to provide for clients' foreign exchange needs on the best basis possible, without regard to the goals served, and to direct them toward advantageous transactions. The large sums held abroad by private investors, largely income-tax avoiders, are generally seeking high financial profits, and communication between them and their bankers tends to make movements of funds more concerted. A Federal Reserve study prepared under the direction of Governor Brimmer found that the banks transferred $2.5 billion in the crisis period to mid-March, about half of which was on clients' account. It may be presumed that these estimates are minimal. The available reports do not mention any large operators who were not fully "protected."

With such huge sums seeking profitable moves, it is evident that the control problem overrides any problems of market disequilibrium. Nevertheless, many economists as well as public officials insist on reasserting the virtues of floating as a remedy. One may suspect that some really do not want to know the facts about relative prices or about profiteers pursuing only their own enrichment. They too readily accept the fragmented, partially disorganized world that gives the speculators and hoarders their greatest opportunities.

The devaluations have made the dollar the butt of international jokes, but it is really not so shaky as they would have it appear. No doubt some loss of prestige has occurred, and the fears of those who foresee a total loss of value for the dollar seem to have some confirmation up to this point, but their views offer no approach to a constructive solution. Arthur Burns, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, stated before a Congressional committee that people are losing confidence in paper money. As the world's greatest issuer, regulator and guardian of the value of such money, he should have hastened to point out that there is no alternative to the use of paper money. No significant amount of any other kind of money is available for economic operations. Even when paper money is presumed to be redeemable in something else, the redemption is never really possible, and the paper must do the job. Practically all of the world's business is transacted with pieces of paper made out by purchasers or central banks.

The idea of extreme depreciation that would make the dollar worthless in the next decade or two is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of money and of the control of the money supply in this country. The value of the dollar is not determined by gold or other reserves; it is determined by what it can be exchanged for in the United States. Its value depends not on financial assets but on real assets, on the capacity of the nation's industry to deliver against the promise incorporated in the money unit. Control of the supply is reasonably automatic, because when the government's revenues are not adequate to pay its bills, it must borrow. Although this may result in a limited amount of money creation, depending upon Federal Reserve policy, it is not at all similar to the great inflations of history in which governments ran the printing presses without restraint and created economic chaos.

Although the policies of the government are widely mistrusted, people accept the dollar freely and the economic position of the average consumer has not been seriously undermined. True, the dollar has lost 50 per cent of its purchasing power in the last quarter century, but real per capita income has risen 150 per cent. So those who were forced to rely on this depreciating currency came out substantially better off. The basis for real progress still exists, more so here than in most other countries, where inflationary pressures are even greater.

Mistrust is aggravated by an Administration that constantly says it is fighting inflation but acts in ways to suggest that the reverse is true. The strong price upsurge currently under way is basically the result of factors such as the following:

(1) The hands-off policy on farm products has permitted tremendous profiteering in foodstuffs. The direct impact of this will be aggravated as the year goes on by the effects of rising food costs on wage settlements in coming labor negotiations.

(2) The shift to Phase III was a policy change without any economic basis. There had been no cooling of the economy but rather a marked heating-up at the time this decision was taken. It permits a sharp acceleration of prices immediately, and a continued upward movement with future increases in costs.

(3) The devaluation is a measure to help inflation run its course. Official estimates of the price increases it will fasten on the consumer are minimal guesses. Given the high level of imports with higher price tags, the authorization to pass on cost increases, and the higher profit margins allowed competing domestic producers, the devaluation will probably cost the consumer much more than the estimated $3 billion.

(*4*) The wage target of 5.5 per cent is presumably to be maintained by getting a big stick out of the closet if necessary. However, that threat has been effectively compromised by assurances given labor leaders that the policy will be applied with flexibility. In this situation, flexibility has no downward meaning. So the 5.5 per cent ceiling has in effect been converted into a floor.

(*5*) The money supply and all kinds of credit were permitted to expand excessively all through 1972. Expan-

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sion of the money supply went on at the rate of 11 per cent. The total funds raised by nonfinancial sectors in U.S. credit markets amounted to $168 billion. The result is a veritable splurge of buying on credit, which holds the distinct threat of a reversal, since movements of this kind are typically short-lived.

Other economic and social problems seem to be manhandled on a broad front for petty political advantage. Large budget deficits running to $25 billion in a period of general prosperity suggest the possibility of still greater lack of fiscal responsibility in the future. Such criticisms are frightening, but they often overlook the constitutional and other constraints under which any administration must operate.

Although many reasons for lack of faith in the dollar are mistaken, they present obstacles to urgently needed reforms. Today's basic economics of production and distribution require a substantial degree of price stability across international boundaries as well as at home. The current floating may tend temporarily to disrupt some export industries and moderately disinflate some countries without serious harm. What cannot be tolerated for long is deterioration into conditions where every man is only for himself, like those that prevailed in the Great Depression of the 1930s. It is imperative, therefore, that action toward a world monetary agreement be speeded.

Unfortunately, U.S. policies combine with a wide resort in other countries to the use of inflationary measures for maximizing growth and protectionist measures for retaining past gains. The commitment to full employment exerts an upward pressure on prices almost everywhere. Wage rates abroad as well as here are notoriously sticky on the down side. Labor and industry abroad are also equally sensitive to the threat of foreign competition. This worldwide tendency has created a psychology that would not be easy to deal with, even were governments working together for mutually advantageous solutions.

Another indication of confusion, suspicion and uncertainty was the gold rush. Buying in the free markets of Europe drove the price above $100 an ounce, and further increases are predicted, as if inflation might be of the unlimited variety. This exorbitant valuation has made gold a feeding ground for greed. As long as people are willing to carry its unproductive weight at a cost of 7 per cent or more a year, in hopes of a much larger devaluation, it will hang a fog of superstition over attempts to create a new monetary system. The notion that an ounce of raw gold has as much utility as a good suit of clothes or a kitchen range is purely imaginary, a mythology of inherent worth useful only to producers, hoarders and speculators. Gold's real worth is the money it can be exchanged for, and this is determined for the moment by the dreams of speculators and hoarders.

There are other people who believe that gold is the world's only hope for a solid restraint on monetary expansion, but their longing for a return to the good old days fails to recognize that gold had to be abandoned for this purpose. It is too inflexible and too subject to arbitrary changes as portions of the total stock move into or out of private hoards. Its price, but for monetary stockpiling, would be only a fraction of what the credulous now pay for it. The world's total inventory of raw gold may be estimated at $80 billion, of which almost $50 billion is held in the reserves of central banks and governments, where it lies in dead uselessness as a menace to progress on the world monetary scene. The best thing that could be done to counter monetary speculation would be to get gold out of the picture as soon as possible by making it an ordinary commodity subject to nonmonetary laws of supply and demand.

Still another kind of impediment derives from meretricious arguments, supported by lenders everywhere, that interest rates should be raised to lure dollars back to America. The fallacy in this argument was revealed in 1969. Bringing dollars back at record high interest rates then merely resulted in still higher record interest rates in Europe. All that was accomplished was the greater enrichment of those with money to lend. But the move served to reveal the strategy of pricing money, which uses any marginal increase in cost as a basis for stepping up rates on a much larger volume of loans. The high rates tend, furthermore, to increase the volume of international hot money seeking gains, and that is the last thing the world needs at this time.

How the nations can cut through the screen of misconceptions, superstitions and half-truths is hard to see. It will be almost impossible if each imperiously sustains its right to act independently in gaining special advantages or protecting against losses. There is no hope that the myriad problems of money, trade and economic relations can be subject to agreement at once. Many of them will have to be approached step by step, but even a partial agreement on monetary arrangements would make it easier to deal with other problems. The recent meeting of the Committee of Twenty was a lesson in how to make anything constructive hard to achieve. The huge IMF conference room was inadequate to hold the 240 representatives, experts and aides who showed up. Nevertheless, the intent was good, and it does not seem futile to hope that a small working group might produce agreement on some points that would represent substantial progress.

Fixing exchange rates is not likely to be one of the gains in the near future. A more realistic goal would be agreement on a new international monetary standard and a reduction in the overhang of excess dollars that now exists in various parts of the world. The new monetary unit would be a paper standard whose value would depend, not on a specific list of commodities in one country but on the multiple lists of commodities available in all the participating countries. The volume of the new monetary units put into circulation quickly ought to be large enough to provide a sufficient quantity of reserves for the growth of international trade and finance. There are now more than $70 billion in official holdings, partly needed monetary reserves and partly excessive accumulations from balance-of-payments surpluses or ineffective pegging operations. Some of these could be converted to new international monetary units by turning them over for long-term funding by the IMF. In relation to the new monetary unit, the dollar would have the same status as any other national currency. Preferably, gold would be detached from the new monetary unit completely; it will be adequate during the transition period

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if the IMF is authorized to buy and sell gold in the currencies of various countries which still desire to maintain some attachment to gold.

Even this moderate degree of progress would help to counteract the present tendencies toward dissension and to prevent deterioration of international relations. Devaluation and some other self-serving maneuvers would be subject to approval by the IMF, and its own policies and limitations would be subject to agreements among the participating nations. If each country seeks to do what none can do by itself, the result is likely to be another trip through the wringer of deflation. Although such a trip might bring back the kind of sanity that spells stabilization, the world can ill afford its other consequences. □

THE GAO: A GENERAL ACCOUNTING

PETER GRUENSTEIN

Not long ago, a Congressional aide asked his boss, a respected senior member, to talk with Elmer Staats, Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office (GAO), about a problem that needed attention. After getting Staats on the line, the aide handed the phone to the Congressman who, covering the mouthpiece with his hand, inquired of his assistant: "What's this guy's name?" A second later he bellowed into the phone: "Hello, Elmer?"

The member's ignorance of Staats is not surprising. After more than fifty years of existence, the GAO—almost invariably described as "Congress' watchdog agency"—remains one of the most obscure of important government agencies, not only to the general public but to many members of Congress and their staffs. Yet, at a time when Congress is attempting to regain some of its lost authority and prestige from the now dominant executive, the GAO is one of its potentially most potent—but at present least utilized—resources.

The GAO was established under the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921, which also established the Budget Bureau (now the Office of Management and Budget). The Act gave the comptroller general "access to and the right to examine any books, documents, papers, or records" of all federal departments and agencies. It hasn't completely worked out that way. The Pentagon and State Department have denied GAO access to records involving U.S. relations with foreign countries and international lending institutions. The Internal Revenue Service has consistently refused the GAO access to tax returns and other records, which has prevented the agency from monitoring the efficiency of IRS revenue collections ($208 billion in fiscal 1972). The Emergency Loan Board has denied GAO's right to examine records involving the more than $200 million government bailout of Lockheed Corporation. By statute, the GAO cannot examine any records of intelligence agencies.

Through World War II GAO aptly fit the image of the bow-tied, green-visored bookkeeper, hunched over ledgers to make sure that the 500 reams of paper ordered by the General Services Administration were duly received and paid for. It was only after the Korean War, under Comptroller General Joseph Campbell, that the GAO began actively to investigate the efficiency of federal agencies. Campbell's GAO began to churn out tough, frank exposés of the Pentagon—identifying waste, illegal actions and deception, and naming specific contractors.

But, alas, GAO was ahead of its time. In 1965 a government operations subcommittee under Rep. Chet Holifield (D., Calif.) began an investigation—more appropriately, an inquisition—of the GAO's new-found vigor. Holifield asked: "Is the GAO, as some government and industry parties believe, enforcing its own standard of procurement on government and industry without authority of law or without the benefit of the intimate technical and business experience which resides in the parties to the procurement process?" Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Robert H. Charles, answered: "The sanctity of contracts is the bedrock of our commercial system. You nibble away at this and you nibble away at something far bigger than an occasional refund out of the millions of transactions in which we are involved." Holifield agreed and, by the time the holocaust was over, Campbell had suffered a heart attack and resigned as comptroller general. Many believed he would have been forced to resign anyway.

President Johnson then appointed Elmer Staats, a career civil servant who was serving as deputy director of the Budget Bureau. (The comptroller general is appointed to a fifteen-year nonrenewable term at the present salary of $42,500 per year. He can be removed only by a joint resolution of the Congress which requires the assent of the President.) Staats immediately agreed to tone down GAO's investigative zeal. The Defense Department reports became duller and less frank.

Under Staats, however, GAO has expanded its operations enormously. Last year, operating on a budget of $95 million and with 3,150 professionals (mostly accountants and lawyers) on its staff, the GAO churned out 898 reports to Congress and agencies, many of them recommending ways to increase efficiency and reduce waste. The reports cover a very wide range of government activity; recent examples include: "Purchase of Equipment from the Hamilton Watch Company, and the Related Award of a Contract, to Produce M-565 Time Fuses," "Use of Local Freight Companies by the Chicago Federal Supply Service" and "Questionable Effectiveness of a $20 Million Grant Supporting India's Family Planning Program."

The quality of GAO's professional staff is probably higher than that of other government agencies. The accuracy of its investigative work is generally excellent and

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its work has often been significant. For example, several GAO reports have disclosed gross inefficiency at Litton's Pascagoula, Miss., shipyard, which holds more than $3 billion in defense contracts. A December 1972 report detailed how the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) could save about $1 billion in its home-ownership assistance programs. Recently also, GAO uncovered frighteningly unsanitary conditions at meat-packing plants, the result of inadequate federal inspection.

The fact that the GAO is such a valuable tool to both Congressional committees and members has made it somewhat a sacred cow on the Hill and has tended to hide some of its weaknesses. Members and staffers who use the GAO most hesitate to endanger their working relationships by public criticism of the agency. But it is clear to me, from more than forty discussions with Congressmen, their staffs and others close to GAO, that the watchdog is sometimes caught napping and sometimes even found running way from the burglar. Even GAO's most ardent supporters on the Hill admit that its studies are often unnecessarily equivocal. "Their favorite word is 'may' and they are always hedging," says one Congressional aide. Their reports are "namby-pamby," says another. The words "chicken" and "mealy-mouthed" pop up. Martin Lobell, former legislative assistant to Sen. William Proxmire (D., Wis.), cites one example of GAO's excessive caution. Proxmire had requested a report on the alleged theft of 50 per cent of gasoline shipped by the United States to Thailand. In the draft study, Lobell said, "after fully documenting how the gasoline was stolen and by whom, the GAO refused to name the responsible U.S. officials. We did a lot of screaming, and they finally came around and agreed to name the officials in the final report."

Another common complaint is that GAO reports lack timeliness. "GAO reports are often more history than investigation," one Congressional source said. For example, each year the GAO reviews all major weapons systems (about seventy at present) and deluges Congress with dozens of individual reports in March and April. But the studies, while timed to help the armed services and appropriations committees with their budgetary work for the next fiscal year, are based on June 30th data of the previous year. Thus, the reports are at least nine months old and often hopelessly out of date. A GAO auditor says they are trying to use more current data, but Richard Kaufman, Joint Economic Committee economist, says he has seen no improvement. The delay prompted an aide to Rep. Les Aspin (D., Wis.) to ask the GAO to compute cost overruns of major weapon systems quarterly, on the basis of Selected Acquisition Reports (SAR). The GAO said that would take twenty-seven man-days to do and refused. Aspin's aide said it would take two or three hours to add up the figures already computed in the SARs and volunteered to do it himself if the GAO would make the reports available. GAO said it couldn't do that, but did agree finally to take on the job itself. Four months after his latest request for the SAR figures, Aspin's aide is still waiting.

Another frequent criticism is that the GAO suffers from an "accountant's mentality," as one Senate committee aide puts it. (It employs 2,343 accountants, but

only seven economists.) Despite some attempts by Staats to hire more economists, statisticians, mathematicians and other nonaccountant types, Kaufman says he has not "seen any evidence of broadened professional expertise" in GAO. He and others also believe that GAO is wasting some of its manpower on trivial studies.

But the most disturbing criticism of the GAO—and one of the best documented—is that when things get hot, it tends to wilt. A partial list of the evidence:

¶A. Ernest Fitzgerald, the former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force who blew the whistle on the billion-dollar cost overruns on Lockheed's C-5A jet transports, charges that the "GAO was a conscious part of the C-5A cover-up. They knew about it before I did." When Lockheed later pleaded that it was on the verge of bankruptcy and asked Congress for a handout, the GAO was slow in attempting to determine the validity of Lockheed's claims of indigence. When Senator Proxmire, in March 1970, first requested that GAO check on Lockheed's financial condition, Staats replied in May by sending him a copy of the firm's annual report, plus some financial statements provided by the Air Force. When Proxmire and Sen. Richard Schweiker (R., Pa.) wrote Staats in September of 1970 that "we have no official information as to either the cause of their difficulties or the extent of them," Staats finally attempted to get the necessary data, but ran into a roadblock. In November 1970 he wrote to Proxmire that "We have been unable to conduct a study of Lockheed's financial capability to deliver C-5A aircraft because we have not been able to gain access to the necessary data." Even though GAO had clear statutory authority to demand the Lockheed data and present

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it to Congress, Staats worked out a "compromise" with the Department of Defense whereby GAO could look at, but not copy, the data and could tell Congress only its opinion—not the facts on which it was based—as to whether Lockheed was financially capable of producing the transports. Staats was criticized for so quickly abandoning GAO's statutory authority.

More recently the GAO has come under renewed attacks for its handling of another C-5A study. Proxmire had asked the GAO to investigate statements made before the Joint Economic Committee in 1971 by former Lockheed manager Henry Durham. Durham's key charge was that Lockheed had falsified C-5A production records in order to accelerate federal payments. While GAO's Atlanta office confirmed virtually all of Durham's assertions, Staats rejected much of the report's findings—without justification, according to Fitzgerald. On March 3, 1973, *Congressional Quarterly* reported that it had obtained documents, including some sworn affidavits, from other former Lockheed employees which also showed that Lockheed was grossly deceiving the government through the falsification of records and parts for the C-5A.

¶The GAO promised Rep. Wright Patman (D., Tex.), chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee, that it would issue a report on August 23 last year concerning the use of GOP campaign funds in the Watergate bugging incident. After chief Republican fund raiser Maurice Stans telephoned Philip Hughes, director of the GAO election office, Staats ordered Hughes and a GAO auditor to fly to Miami, where Stans was attending the GOP convention, and discuss the report with him. By doing this, the GAO delayed issuance of the report and broke an appointment with Patman's committee staff to discuss it with them. Charged Patman: "The GAO has taken the position of conferring and cooperating with those being investigated, while refusing to discuss the case and provide information to the staff investigators of the Banking and Currency Committee. . . . I have received no adequate answer for GAO's failure to live up to its promises and at this point I can only conclude that it is allowing its investigators to give the Republican Party time to put a good face on this sordid affair." While the report eventually issued by the GAO was not a whitewash, it raised very serious questions about both GAO's loyalties and methods of operation.

¶Gary Sellers, legislative assistant to Rep. Phillip Burton (D., Calif.) and a former Nader associate, tried in late August 1972 to obtain White House payroll records. Sellers believed that the White House had broken its promise to Congress to hire no more than the 540 staffers approved by Congress. He also thought that the names of some of those involved in the Watergate incident might turn up on recent White House payrolls. On August 25 Burton wrote to Staats asking the GAO to obtain recent payroll records for him. Under the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921, the GAO has a right of *immediate* access to all payroll records; it is not even required to give notice but can walk right into the agency and demand to see them then and there. Staats wrote back to Burton that he would comply with his request. However, in a letter dated August 31 Staats informed Burton that the White House had refused GAO access to the records until H. R. Haldeman personally approved. Haldeman was then traveling with the President and would not be back until September 5. According to Sellers the GAO, rather than asserting its authority to obtain the payroll records immediately, "just rolled over and played dead." GAO did not finally obtain most of the payroll records for Burton until after the election, more than two months after Burton's original request. Sellers, whose investigation did reveal that the White House had hired more than sixty unauthorized staffers, charges that the GAO caved in to the White House, failed to represent Congress' interests, and even lied to him about the existence of certain files.

While the GAO has pursued some of its investigations with something less than the zeal one would hope for from a watchdog agency, it is also true that it is hampered in many of its investigations by lack of statutory authority. Incredibly, Congress' watchdog does not have the right to subpoena contractors' records, nor can it go directly to court to stop an agency from illegally withholding records from GAO's purview. When a scandal arose several years ago concerning the misuse of PX funds, the GAO could not investigate because nonappropriated funds were involved—that is, the funds misused were receipts from PX clubs, not money appropriated by Congress.

¶Moreover, the 1921 Budget and Accounting Act applies no sanctions against agencies which illegally refuse to grant access to records. Thus, the Defense Department and IRS can flout the 1921 Act with impunity, knowing that GAO has no legal recourse. Sen. William Fulbright (D., Ark.) has introduced legislation that would cut off funds from any agency that refused to provide requested information to Congress, including the GAO, within sixty days of the request. Sen. Abraham Ribicoff (D., Conn.) has also introduced a bill that would provide GAO with adequate legal authority to obtain information from recalcitrant agencies. (The GAO is expected to recommend a similar bill to the Senate Government Operations Committee.) The Ribicoff bill, which passed the Senate in 1970 only to die in the House, stands a fair chance of passing the Senate again. "There is a temperament around here to strengthen GAO in light of the current battle with the Administration," a committee source said. However, there is no indication that Representative Holifield is any less inclined to protect California defense contractors by keeping GAO as impotent as is legally possible.

Even without new legal authority, however, GAO could significantly increase its value to Congress. Elmer Staats obviously learned his lesson well from the Holifield hearings on former Comptroller General Campbell—in fact, he was chosen to replace Campbell partly on the basis of his blandness—and his first rule as GAO chief has been to walk softly and carry a small stick. Staats is a very competent, politically sensitive administrator who, unfortunately, often confuses objectivity with passivity and thoroughness with red tape. The GAO could monitor the executive more aggressively and effectively without losing its objectivity. GAO may well be Congress' most potent tool in its fight against executive encroachment, but it is clear that both the watchdog's bark and bite could be a bit more ferocious. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Courting the 'Objective Conditions' for Revolution

A LONG VIEW FROM THE LEFT: Memoirs of an American Revolutionary. *By Al Richmond. Houghton Mifflin Co. 447 pp. $8.95.*

MAX GORDON

For thirty-one years Al Richmond was, successively, managing editor and editor in chief of the Communist Party's West Coast newspaper, *The People's World*, and a leading figure in the region's Communist movement. He presided over the paper's inaugural in 1938 and resigned his editorship in 1969 when the party's national leadership, aroused by his opposition to the Soviet military invasion of Czechoslovakia, took measures to eliminate what little autonomy the West Coast organization had until then possessed. He remained a party member. The motivation for his book, he writes, is "to make the American Communist experience comprehensible and credible" to those who were not involved. He believes that the revolutionary impulse, with its ebb and flow, will persist in American life, and he regards the Communist experience as a significant one within the historical continuum.

Though Richmond shared many of the views of colleagues who left the party following the Khrushchev revelations of Stalinist terror and the Soviet military invasion of Hungary—both in 1956—Richmond remained. The two events were devastating to American communism, he notes. From 1949 to 1956, the party lost about two-thirds of its membership. By early 1958, it had lost two-thirds of the remaining membership as well as large numbers of the dedicated "cadre," professional revolutionaries who as youths in the turbulent thirties had placed their lives at the party's service. They departed when their efforts to free the party from its rigid, dogmatic, ideological subservience to Soviet experience and requirements proved futile. The failure was rendered the more poignant by the realization that the monstrosities revealed by Khrushchev were possible under socialism on the Soviet pattern, and that they had been denied or rationalized by American Communists.

Richmond was associated with the abortive move to reshape the party at the time of the Hungarian Revolution, but he did not join the "exodus" because, he believed, the California party enjoyed considerable autonomy and he could continue to edit *The People's World* in the interests of a "Left revival." Several other West Coast leaders, including five of his fellow defendants in the California Smith Act trial, did leave, however.

A few who joined the exodus at about that time have sought to evaluate or describe their experience in books. John Gates, editor in chief of *The Daily Worker*, in a memoir written soon after his departure in 1957, described the party's internal conflicts to a world which was not precisely fascinated by the subject. George Charney, a top New York State leader, waited a decade before evaluating his experience in a more introspective work. More recently Joseph Starobin, a former foreign editor of *The Daily Worker*, attempted an objective, historical study of the central ideological and political sources of party tension which in the end contributed to its substantial disintegration.

These three wrote as ex-Communists and were preoccupied with the sources of the party's historic decline generally, and their own disenchantment in particular. Richmond, still a member, is not preoccupied with the party's decline, though his essentially similar critique is present in limited, and muted, form. His continued association with the party serves as something of a corrective to the earlier works in that it has led him to give greater play to the party's positive contributions to American life, particularly in the 1930s. But he is less successful in making the reasons for the party's later descent into irrelevance "comprehensible and credible" to those who were not involved.

Like Charney and Starobin, Richmond is concerned with explaining the Communist experience to the New Left. In the form of a personal memoir, he seeks to provide insights into existing social conditions and the party's response to them in areas in which he was involved. Whereas the earlier works were written as unadorned exposition, Richmond employs some literary artistry, including flashes of a gentle yet biting humor. He writes, selectively, of the unemployed movement and the organization of the Maritime Workers Industrial Union in the early 1930s; the Spanish Civil War (relating the story of a friend who was killed on Hill 666 in the Sierra Pandolls); the Nazi-Soviet Pact (describing the party's, and his, confusion at the time it was concluded); the 1948 Wallace movement; McCarthyism; the Smith Act trials; prison; Czechoslovakia; Cuba. Interspersed are chapters devoted to discussion of specific ideological issues dividing the "old Left" and the "New Left."

The Left generations differ perhaps most fundamentally on the merits of the "United Front," or coalition, policy pursued by the Communist Party in support of the New Deal in the 1930s, and of the anti-Axis war in the 1940s. As Richmond observes, for Communists this policy is related to the problem of transition to socialism. It is in fact so regarded by Communists in most developed capitalist countries. It assumes that revolutions do not spring from the subjective desires of revolutionaries but out of existing social conditions. United Front movements are the means of generating, and giving direction to, mass political struggle for the attainment or defense of popular needs, a struggle which is essential to the creation of the conditions for revolutionary social change.

Richmond maintains that in the 1930s American Communists made sophisticated efforts to cope with the complex, highly elusive, problems of revolutionary transition, but that these efforts are now perceived by younger radicals to be a mass of blunders and opportunism. He argues, rightly I think, that much of this New Left criticism is foolish, springing from the hallucination that the working class in developed capitalist countries, including the United States, was diverted from Socialist revolution by the projection of fascism, not capitalism, as the immediate target. Missing from this thesis, Richmond observes, is any serious concept of what makes a revolution and of the realities of American life.

He might have added that in the 1930s the Socialist Party, initially far stronger than the Communist Party, did make capitalism, not fascism, its immediate target. During the decade the Socialist Party was reduced to a small, largely impotent group, and the Communists became the dominant Left force. The

Max Gordon, a former member of the editorial board of The Daily Worker, *resigned from the Communist Party in 1958. He is now a free-lance writer. Last summer he visited Japan and Australia.*

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relevant difference between them was the Communist coalition policy in support of the labor and welfare measures of the New Deal, as against the Socialist policy of opposing to the New Deal the demand for socialism. As Richmond insists, any effective revolutionary movement must change the consciousness of millions. It can do so only if it starts with what is relevant to the mass, not what ought to be. In the 1930s, what was relevant to the mass was food and shelter, not a theory of society. The United Front policy of the Communists generated a politics in which the Left influenced and led millions in great popular movements based on issues relevant to them. In the process, the Communists introduced at least several hundred thousand Americans to the Socialist ideal, including the parents of many young radicals who now criticize the policy and who probably would not have been radicals except for it. Had the Communists themselves not adopted the United Front tactic, they would doubtless have remained an impotent sect.

The country went through a vast transformation in the course of the 1930s. Not only was the working class organized but powerful movements were built among farmers, students, youth, intellectuals, professionals, and artists and writers, as well as among the jobless. Among blacks, militant organization developed which was not directed at a return to Africa. Communists were decisive in the organizational process but, Richmond notes, they could not have done it alone. Nor could it have been done alone by the "Center" forces in American life. A coalition of the two was essential. Of course, New Left radicals tend to dismiss trade union organization and the economic gains won by the coalition as of no importance. But, as Richmond rightly insists, if the organizational and economic gains had not then been attained, they would be at the top of the radical agenda today. Moreover, in addition to those who became Socialist-minded, the social attitudes of great numbers of participants in those organizing movements were permanently changed as a result of their experience. The political effects, I suspect, are still with us in intangible ways.

Richmond does suggest that the Communists surrendered too much independence and principle in order to maintain the Center-Left coalition. Given the subtle and delicate relationships which determined tactics in specific situations at the time, the merits of this opinion are hard to assess today. As a prime example, Richmond cites accommodation of the Communists to anti-Communist resolutions by the Auto Workers union in 1940 and by the CIO in 1947, and the lack of independent militancy during the war. He maintains that these accommodations sapped the Left's vitality and led to its decline, but argues that errors in the execution of a policy should not condemn the policy itself.

He concedes too much to the New Left position, which also tends to attribute the Communist decline to a lack of independent militancy which it perceives as the result of the coalition policy. Whatever the merits of the critique of the policy, the thesis is fallacious. The cold war and McCarthyism, in particular the identification of the Communist Party with the Soviet Union in the context of the cold war, and the inability of the Communists to maneuver because of their lack of ideological independence from the Soviet Union, were vastly more decisive as reasons for the Communist decline after 1948. One can properly argue, as indeed Richmond does in discussing the aftermath of the 1948 Wallace movement, that the precipitate cutting of coalition bonds—a consequence of C.P. rigidity—was a major element in the decline. The critical aspect of the party's lack of independence was that related to its international association, not to its domestic alliances.

Richmond also attributes the party's limited success in winning American workers to socialism in part to its pro-

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jection of the Soviet model, and in part to its tendency to relegate the question to a back seat. The latter factor is also part of the New Left critique. The two reasons are related. The Soviet Socialist model—the only one extant—repelled American workers, and the realization of this, conscious or not, inhibited Communists from giving Socialist advocacy more prominence. They could not have done so without sacrificing their effectiveness in leading existing struggles and would have gained nothing ideologically in the process. The claim of the New Left that the Communists ignored Socialist advocacy as a matter of policy is inaccurate. It was the subject of ceaseless exhortation by the party leadership, subordinated in practice by those in the field because it was incompatible with an effective coalition strategy and sterile without such a strategy.

In sum, the problem confronting any viable revolutionary movement in the largely unorganized America of the 1930s was the organization of the people to defend themselves against the ravages of a disastrous economic crisis and to cut into the previously uninhibited political power of the "economic royalists." As Richmond suggests, it is nonsense to assume that the capitalist system in the United States was then seriously threatened or could have been replaced. Vastly more powerful Communist parties in far weaker capitalist countries had been unable to overturn their governments, and in Germany the party was smashed because it had rejected a United Front. When coalition tactics were later vitiated in the United States, the Left was easily scattered. Nor has the New Left itself come up with more effective strategies for displacing capitalism with socialism—in the United States or in any other developed capitalist nation.

Problems of Socialist transition are historically associated with international relationships in the Communist world. Richmond is sensitive to the dependence of the U.S. Communist Party on "Stalinist dogmatism." He attributes this to a "poverty of theoretical culture and political tradition" in America extending beyond the Communist experience. He argues, in fact, that the fundamental historical problem of American radicalism—the creation of an indigenous revolutionary movement with the theoretical capacity and political skills to make it viable in the American environment—has been obscured by exclusive emphasis on the explicit Communist phenomenon. To prove the point, he cites some obscure examples of early Socialist Party dependence on German Social Democrat leaders for direction. He also observes that the theoretical gods of the New Left are all foreigners—Che, Mao, Fidel, etc.

In essence, however, his explanation of U.S. communism's ideological dependence on Stalinist dogmatism becomes exculpation, and it is not persuasive. Debs's relationship to German Social Democracy cannot be said to parallel William Z. Foster's to the Soviet Union. Moreover, nations like Australia and Japan are no more distinguished for a theoretical culture than the United States, yet the Communist parties of both have sharply rejected, in recent years, any form of dependence on Soviet or Chinese communism and have unhesitatingly criticized the two Communist superpowers. Richmond confuses matters by lumping theoretical originality with operational and ideological independence. The theory guiding a Communist movement may not necessarily be original or profound, but it can be fashioned without an eye toward the reaction in Moscow.

Yet his discussion of the consequences, positive and negative, of Communist dependence on international communism is provocative. In 1928, the Communist International predicted imminent world economic crisis, and in late 1929 it called for demonstrations of the unemployed throughout the world. Richmond describes in graphic detail his participation as a 16-year-old in the historic demonstrations of the unemployed in New York on March 6, 1930, in response to the Comintern's appeal. Nationwide these demonstrations dramatically brought to public attention the fact that the tragedy of the crisis was not limited to bankrupt millionaire suicides. Similarly, Richmond recalls that accumulated Communist experience in the effort to block fascism in several countries led to the Communist World Congress decision in 1935 to adopt the United Front as a universal tactic. Once the decision was made, its execution was thorough and systematic, and the historic impact, in terms of the ultimate defeat of fascism, was most significant.

In these important respects the Comin-

METAMORPHOSIS

Flesh yields
Where the wasp stings
A welt rises to recede
A drop of blood its only trace
I have been to the field too often

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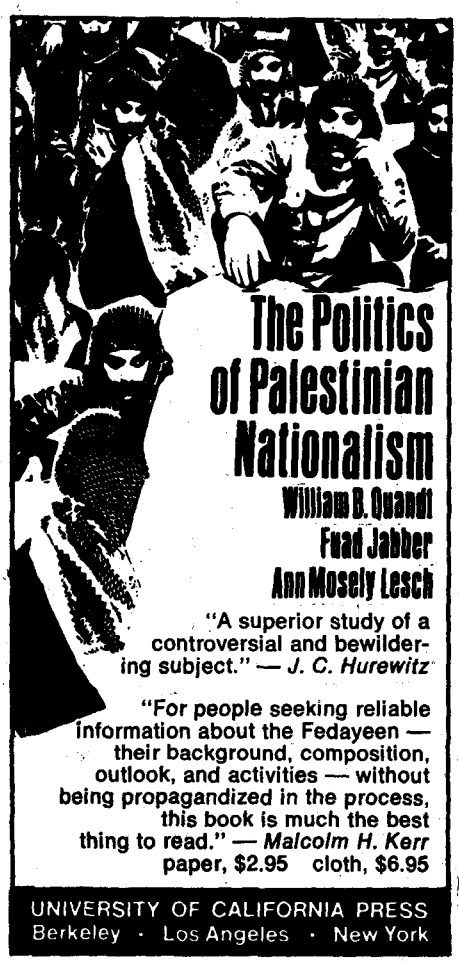
tern's role was salutary for the Communist parties, including that of the United States. Richmond's warning that foreign experience and concepts ought neither to be followed slavishly nor dogmatically dismissed by revolutionaries appears to be justified. But he also notes that the international Communist movement intervened directly in the affairs of the American party to determine its leadership in 1929 and 1945. He attributes these interventions to the American party's incapacity to resolve its own crises, but the pattern they reflected was in the end disastrous. From this it would appear that the problem confronting the world Communist movement is to define a relationship among the national parties which can combine cooperation with independence. At least some national parties believe that the present disarray in the world movement is a result of the historic absence of such a relationship.

Richmond's memoir contributes usefully to our understanding of some aspects of the nation's domestic history of the last forty years. The author not only describes the organization of the unemployed and Left-led independent unions in personal terms but shows how both contributed to the building of the CIO. He discusses the Wallace campaign, characterizing it as a needed "clear-cut radical alternative to the cold war candidacies of Truman and Dewey," but criticizing the disastrous illusion that it fulfilled the radical dream of a viable third party. He depicts McCarthyite terrorism and the behavior of liberals who joined in the witch hunt to protect themselves. The Smith Act arrests, the California trial, and the prison experience of the convicted Communists are discussed from the viewpoint of both victim and newspaper observer. Richmond reminds us that while the convictions were eventually invalidated by the Warren Supreme Court, the Act had served its purpose as an instrument for repressing the Communists. His account of his efforts to explain the indictments to fellow convicts is both penetrating and witty.

Richmond tells, too, of his experience in Czechoslovakia in 1966 and 1968, leading to his conviction that there was no real threat of counterrevolution, hence no justification for Soviet military intervention. Presumably, if there had been such a threat, he would have found intervention justified. He erroneously observes that outside of Western Europe, Communist parties supported the intervention: the Japanese and Australian parties were among its harshest critics.

Some of Richmond's omissions are curious. Though he takes his memoirs to 1969, there is virtually nothing on the Vietnamese War or the struggle against it. Some insight into the overt role of the Communists in the peace movement might have been instructive. Similarly Richmond, who visited the Soviet Union in 1966, is reticent about his reflections on the political workings of the Soviet system following de-Stalinization, though he surely must have had some. Yet he does say much that is provocative and interesting, and he says it well. □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In Sum, a Man of Letters

SPIRIT OF TIME AND PLACE. *By Horace Gregory. W. W. Norton & Co. 336 pp. $8.95.*

ROBERT K. MORRIS

Horace Gregory, who has been publishing poetry and criticism for more than four decades, and who was 75 this year, enjoys the curious distinction of ranking high among contemporary men of letters without ever having had his measure properly taken.*

Though linked to the intellectual and radical movements of the 1930s, Gregory's sensibilities were partially shaped during the 1920s, particularly by Eliot, Lawrence and Freud, all of whom anatomized in their different ways the spiritual poverty of the age. I say partially, for while Gregory showed in his poems, written during the 1930s, a marked assimilation of Eliot's techniques, he came to reject almost wholesale Eliot's dogmatism and his doubts about man's ability to regenerate himself through secular powers alone; and while Gregory embraced Lawrence's primitive idealism, and his belief in the self-renewing myth of the individual, he came to eschew the novelist's stridency and messianic fervor. Even Freud, whose myth of the unconscious is woven into these early poems, and who bears directly on Gregory's first critical book, *Pilgrim of the Apocalypse* (properly enough a study of Lawrence), eventually proved too dark an ally for one seeking to resurrect something positive from the nihilism and general muddle of the age. Gregory's growing concern with humanism and the classic tradition, and his feeling that he could best understand the climate and temper of his own age by mastering the cultural heritage of the past, accounted for his ultimate disenchantment with religion or prophecy or psychology.

What he substituted became peculiarly consistent and peculiarly Gregory. As a poet, he sought to re-establish those timeless myths perennially erupting into modern life; and carrying over this preoccupation into his criticism, he tried to distil from the literature of an age its essence; beyond that even to extract from representative writers and movements its quintessence; and to evoke what the very title of these collected essays suggests is the force most apt to illuminate not only a single creative life but the life and art of an ethos as well. For while the "spirit of time and place" may be no more than another name for genius, Gregory pushes the idea beyond mere contingency, mere phenomenon to

*The forthcoming double volume of *Modern Poetry Studies* (May 1973), devoted to some dozen essays on Gregory and several of his unpublished poems, should, it is to be hoped, correct the oversight.

Robert K. Morris has written several books of criticism on British fiction, and frequently reviews contemporary literature.

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reveal genius' viable and particular design.

Such design is actually inherent in the metaphorical title of the opening fifteen essays, selected from *The Shield of Achilles* volume first published in 1944. The shield, Gregory explains in the preface, given by Hephaestus to Achilles, was "made useful as well as beautiful . . . [and] when we consider the care with which Homer described it, we [may say] that the description and its creation provide an analogy to and criterion for . . . the writing and criticism of poetry in any age." Poetry, then, as subject and object, is Gregory's principal theme: like the shield, it is an implement of warfare, and it also supplies a standard by which man can test and reflect relationships with others; with it, too, he comes armed with self-knowledge to his encounter with the world.

Yet in the great tradition of the poet-critics he often writes about, Gregory's abstractions on art (and consequently on life) are capacious and catholic. The excitement, interest, worth, even truth generated by these personal and thoroughly readable pieces are the result of a poet's vision as much as a critic's revision. Few writing on such matters as the 18th century of Pope and Johnson, the divergent romanticism of Byron, Poe and Landor, the disturbing influence of a Browning "who plunged with the awkwardness of a cheerful whale in and out of the deeper channels of Victorian consciousness," and the impact of Yeats on the modern age have been able to re-create with such élan and completeness "the spirit of time and place." Most of the essays do not run beyond 5,000 words, yet the picture leaps out at us, with the force and scope of genuine vision. Here, for instance, Gregory is talking about the "six years' Darling of a pygmy size" in Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* as parodied by Lewis Carroll in the White Knight's poem; but the image radiates concentrically to transform the type, through a series of rich literary allusions, into an archetype:

> These and a hundred other pictures crowd the scene, filling a decade of unresolved Napoleonic Wars: Miss Austen's precocious girls with clear heads and cool fingers trip between them—and everywhere the hope of the world was seen in a child's face, the child no longer stained by sin, the guiltless child, and the innocent, even idiot boy was believed to possess the secret of human happiness. The reflected likeness of that child may be seen in the pallid, soot-streaked features of Smike and Oliver Twist who followed after, and after them, came the pink-cheeked, Maypole dancing figurines of Miss Kate Greenaway; and a distinct resemblance to the child's behavior may be found among the heroes of social novels, ranging their separate ways through the fiction of the twentieth century.

IN ANOTHER TIME

I am counting clusters of stars
above the fields of salt

counting what could be myself
in another time

moving blindly
through layers of darkness
chilled to my molten center

revolving a million years
without a sound

Tom McKeown

Readable as they are, alive to the past thrusting into the future, Gregory's essays are also enviable models of form: deceptively simple, perfectly controlled, self-contained. In *The Shield of Achilles* essays, as well as those retained from *The Dying Gladiator* (1961)—the latter most valuable for appreciations of Virginia Woolf, Edwin Muir, Dylan Thomas and Samuel Beckett (to whom the present collection is dedicated)—Gregory leads us to the heart of the matter through a kind of trick. Rarely does he imply that he is going to "do a job" on a writer. Rather, a gesture, an idea, a fragment of conversation, an incident from his immediate experience disarms us, creates the illusion of a thoughtful, urbane, eclectic, civilized fellow who can contemplate nothing more delightful than to sit down for a few moments and reconstruct an age. "A new edition of Samuel Johnson's *Poems*," Gregory writes in a typical essay, "is on the library table, its pages freshly cut, its magnificent typeface visible to all who enjoy the reading of a well-printed and sensibly bound book." This is casual enough to seem at first blush no more than the musings and raptures of a bibliophile. But the interest in the artifact presently becomes the profounder involvement with the art; that shifts to the vistas of change opening between the 18th century and ours; that in turn yields to considerations of customs, habit, belief to account for Johnson's moral and intellectual development; finally, he suggests why a writer so prototypically of his age, caught up in every conceivable current of it, should still hold a valuable and permanent place today. I would defy even the most passionate and obdurate adversary of neo-classicism to come away from this essay without sensing the appeal of the 18th-century mind and genius, if not actually fired with the desire to reread Johnson and his contemporaries in the light of the life beyond the literature.

And what Gregory does for those who have loomed large in literary history, he also does for lesser authors in its penumbra. His discovery of Vernon Lee, his serious reassessment of John Clare, his engagement with Thomas Lovell Beddoes and the entire range of the Gothic imagination provide some of the most satisfying pieces in the collection—simply because Gregory is able to illustrate, through instinct and logic, how slack and unnecessary is the neglect of so many good, second-rank writers. What service beyond this a critic can, or should do for those whose work he enjoys and admires I hesitate to say! At a time when criticism has become not only unfashionable but (perhaps justly) suspect for its parochialism, and even—in the hands of dreary stylists and

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"schools"—unpalatable, Gregory takes on extraordinary proportions.

If there is a suitable occasion to begin re-evaluating him as a man of taste, learning and intellect, as one of a vanishing breed of humanitarians and humanists, as an excellent stylist, as an assimilator and transmitter of aesthetics and poetics, it is this volume. The forty years of thoughts, reflections, perceptions, quirks, prejudices, eccentricities and experiences contained here are in themselves enough to reward our reading and rereading them. More, they cohere as a document of the growth and development of a cultivated, expansive literary mind, of a critic who has raised criticism to an art, even, in Whitman's word, to a church. The "spirit of time and place" that inspired Gregory in the writing of these essays should move us, I believe, to take his measure anew. □

Current Issues & the 18th Century

IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY. *By J. H. Plumb. Houghton Mifflin Co. 273 pp. $6.95.*

LESTER WILSON

Professor Plumb has gathered together thirty-five essays, most of which have already appeared as book reviews and articles in various magazines and journals. The essays range from "De Mortuis," a brief excursion into the vagaries of American mortuary customs, to "Reason and Unreason in the Eighteenth Century: The English Experience." The 18th century receives most of his attention; it is also the period to which he has devoted much of his monographic work. There are, however, essays of a more general nature which, with heavy leanings on historical roots, touch on contemporary problems—on urban riots, childhood, the emancipation of women, the desecration of the American city.

Professor Plumb's essays must be read with his understanding of the unfolding of history in mind. In an earlier work, *The Death of the Past* (1970), he defines the historical process and the role of the historian:

> It is to me the one truth of history—that the condition of mankind has improved—materially alas more than morally, but nevertheless both have improved. Progress has come by fits and starts; retrogressions are common. Man's success has derived from his application of reason, whether this has been to technical or social questions. And it is the duty of the historian to give humanity some confidence in a task that will be cruel and long—the resolution of the tensions and antipathies that exist within the human species.

History spells progress, and the historian must deal in a positive manner with man's never-ending struggle to improve his lot. Plumb is rarely at a loss to do so in his latest book; the reader is never unaware of humankind's progress toward civility and a more humane world.

"The Woman's Burden," an essay on the amelioration of the position of women in society, illustrates Plumb's approach. Historically, women of all classes, excepting only the very rich, have been enslaved within their homes. Pregnancy, childbirth and household drudgery successfully kept them from the freedoms enjoyed by masculine society. Property arrangements imposed through the marriage contract and the weight of law codes also contributed to their subjugation. However, the reader is assured in this essay that the status of women has "vastly improved," and that industrial society is therefore in the midst of a social revolution. "Women still cry for liberation, and links of their old shackles still hobble their lives," says Plumb, but a vast change has come about, and "the freedom, the opportunities, the range of experience open to women borders, for the perceptive historian, on the incredible." There is, however, an element of tragedy in this transformation because no clearly defined social role awaits the newly liberated woman. And, in spite of the author's reasoned optimism, it should be obvious that women are still suffering from lingerings of the past, and the hazards of the future will hardly dampen their impatience for equality of status in the present. Progress does come by fits and starts, but often the retrogressions appear of more importance to those suffering from centuries-long oppression.

In another very stimulating essay, Plumb examines the traditional approach to the 18th century in terms of developments in England. The Enlightenment in England was mostly a late 17th-century phenomenon. Political stability in the following century led to a hardening of the arteries, and so he can claim that "as faith in reason starts earlier in England, among men of power, so does flight from it begin earlier too." Locke and Burke are examples of this change; in the former he sees a "philosopher who wished to explain the realities of nature, including man himself," and in the latter, the "philosopher of anti-intellectualism; a man who made a mystique of tradition." During the 18th century the Enlightenment in England moved elsewhere; rationalism and secularism began to penetrate lower strata of English society. The Age of Reason was transferred from London to the provincial cities, to Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds. Too little attention has been given this phenomenon, Plumb argues. Surely in England, reason was no longer "the propaganda of a family of philosophers"; rather it was the property of dissenters, of factory owners, skilled mechanics and craftsmen—of the nongoverning classes of English society.

Plumb has offered us some remarkably well-written and perceptive essays. But, since most of them have appeared in other publications, and since they are largely taken from articles that were meant to be book reviews, it is doubtful if the intellectually curious, nonspecialist reader will be interested in this kind of presentation. To appeal to a wider public, "truths worth the telling" might have more success with a more appropriate format. □

Lester Wilson teaches history at Long Island University.

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THEATRE / Harold Clurman

"I wouldn't part with one inch of his nose," Henry James said of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Though he recognized a certain factitiousness in the play, he could not deny its effectiveness. The play—which ran a record number of performances in its original 1897 production, and made the Parisian critics on opening night cry and embrace one another, rejoicing in the reversion to the romantic after the theatre's having for some time soiled itself in a slough of naturalism—always works. Almost every one of its revivals in Paris, as elsewhere, repeats something of its first success. George Jean Nathan thought it the most enchanting of all plays. It melts the stoutest of hearts. And there is hardly an actor who has not been acclaimed in playing its hero. There is so much brio and dash in the role that it lifts the actor above himself; it virtually acts for the actor.

Now at the Palace Theatre, *Cyrano* rides again as a musical with lyrics by Anthony Burgess and music by Michael J. Lewis. The tough-minded or hip young girl with whom I saw the show shed unabashed tears at poor Cyrano's plight and fell in love with Christopher Plummer, who was the evening's star. She had never before seen the play in any shape or form. (Walter Damrosch years ago made an opera of it.) So it is historically evident that *Cyrano* has something!

The last time I saw the play in Paris it occurred to me that most of Rostand's work is a brave confession of failure, a bright mask of heartbreak. For while Cyrano, for all his "nosiness," is immensely noble, he never wins the prize: he doesn't get the girl. In *L'Aiglon* Napoleon's lamented son never becomes emperor, nor does he return to his native France. In his posthumous play, *The Last Night of Don Juan*, Rostand has the Don ravaged by the realization that he has never been capable of love.

All these hapless creatures have one thing in common: *panache*, a splendor of aspiration, a will to high achievement decked out in the brilliant plumage of dazzling rhetoric. Their ultimate shortcoming is that they never can achieve their desired aim. But this defect is largely concealed by their (that is, the author's) *manner*. Thus *Cyrano de Bergerac* is a "romance" as a substitute for tragedy, just as its sparkling verse is a substitute for poetry.

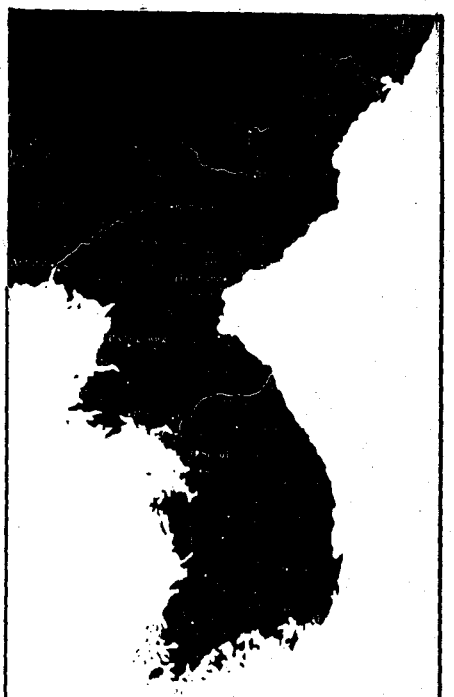
Anthony Burgess' lyrics for the musical are far more "educated" than anything to be found in the field. They are meant to keep close to their source in the French play. But Rostand's verse does not lend itself to song: it is too explicit, complicated, complete. Burgess strives to keep pace with the rapidity of Rostand's onrushing verbal torrent and its nimbleness of movement, which force the composer to speed along with him to the detriment of both. Michael J. Lewis' score serves as a vehicle on which Anthony Burgess' lyrics travel, with the result that we do not easily hear the lyrics and the music hardly exists as expression.

The triumph of the production is Christopher Plummer's performance. He is a spectacularly endowed actor. He is handsome, he handles the rapier flashily (the duel scene, amusingly agile, is the best piece of staging in the show), he sings well, he has bravado, a fine speaking voice, humor, intelligence, a feeling for language, an admirable sense of the stage. Whether it is the demands of this particular musical itself, racing and bustling to a knockout goal, or some inner lack I cannot now say, but the regret and sorrow, the real sadness and its compensation through pride are not present in this Cyrano. Everything is understood and all the difficult technical requirements are fulfilled, but a true life beat is absent. The performance is mostly brain and muscle.

The fatal void cannot be bridged by any other of the show's elements: Michael Kidd's perky direction, the supporting efforts of James Blendick as Captain of the Gascons, Mark Lamos as Christian, or Leigh Beery's voice. Yet it should be added, in all fairness, that there is no actor now to be seen on the boards whose performance reveals such a scope of aptitudes as Christopher Plummer possesses. It is a sort of "lesson."

For a silly time, a silly play. The adjective need not be construed as altogether derogatory. On the contrary, Steve Tesich's *Baba Goya* (The American Place Theatre) is often quite funny. I might describe the play as a freaked-out *You Can't Take It With You*. But even this thumbnail summation is inadequate because, for one thing, there is a "morality" in the Kaufman-Hart farce which implies "Pack up your troubles and enjoy whatever little things you can; for instance, this show!" Tesich, in a devil-may-care fashion, wishes to shoot the works: he doesn't pretend to verisimilitude. He is extravagant and deliberately inconsequential. All that remains for us in the shenanigans of his play is a wry affection for his central figure, the woman named Goya, and her household. One is also reminded of William Saroyan.

Goya lives in Queens with a group of men whom she has picked up in adver-



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tising for a husband. There is first of all a titular incumbent in that position, Mario, an orphan who does not know his nationality, or anything else about his origins. But he is a very good-natured beast. The more sympathetic applicants, rejected as "husbands" (since Mario is still alive), become Goya's grandpa, son or cousin. The only authentic relative in the play seems to be Goya's daughter, who is referred to by everyone as a phony. She cries constantly, is pretty but dumb, and is pretentious about everything except her susceptibility to the male sex. She is redeemed from her overall disgrace by "eloping" with a Japanese burglar who has been brought into Goya's house by Bruno, another orphan who serves as the family "son," and who, though a cop, doesn't have the heart to arrest the burglar.

It's no use: there's no way of or point in summarizing the plot of this play; you may seek for symbols in it if you like, but it makes only the sense of a delighted and intermittently delightful senselessness. The comment is in the play's refusal to take anything in our screwed-up society seriously, except the fondness we may have for one another. The play (a bit too long) is a cockeyed comedy about our cockeyed world. I will not spoil, by disclosing, the best joke of the evening which refers to our not so amiable President.

I liked the company a lot. Olympia Dukakis, as the exasperatedly vulgar Goya, nevertheless manages to win us over by her charming smile and her easy commitment to her own and other people's craziness. John Randolph, Lou Gilbert, R. A. Dow, Randy Kim, James Greene, Peggy Whitton—each contributes another offbeat note to the play's pleasant and even endearing cacophony. Edwin Sherin has directed *Baba Goya* as if it were an altogether straightforward statement, which is probably the right way: aren't we all being solemn about the utterly fantastic state of affairs today? □

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ART

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

An exhibition called "Soft as Art," originated by the New York Cultural Center, is touring the boroughs: Queens County Art and Cultural Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Staten Island Institute. In a way it is admirable that new works of art in unfamiliar media should be circulated so promptly. However the show, a selection of works in nonrigid materials, raises a problem of definition. Soft art is certainly an apt term for volumetric but yielding solids, such as Claes Oldenberg's soft typewriter and telephone or Hannah Wilke's latex labiate forms. However, is the term really extendable to Brenda Miller's linear webs? These are constructed by drawing a grid on the wall and suspending lengths of string at regular points on the grid; this constitutes a structure far from the idea of a substance that will yield to touch or pressure.

Included in "Soft as Art" is a hanging piece by Jackie Ferrara, in which individual strands of cord are loose but scarcely soft and the basic structure is a set, four-tier progression of weighted balls. By extension, the soft definition of Soft art would include suspended and jointed sculptures, such as Maude Boltz's and Laurace James's (both seen recently at the A.I.R. Gallery). Weight, suspension and a loose-jointed extendability seem as significant to this sculpture as the pliability of the individual materials used. Another problem is how to classify artists who use drapery, such as Robert Morris, Anne Healy and Rosemary Mayer. Their technique is blunted if it is absorbed under the heading of Soft art. The cloth, usually light, except for Morris' strips of felt, is handled in terms of its actual weight in suspension. This literalness of substance is traditionally sculptural, but the responsiveness of the materials to light is more like painting; the unprecedented amalgam was very well seen in a recent exhibition by Rosemary Mayer (shared with Judith Bernstein) at A.I.R.

Mayer's part of the show consisted of three large constructions, backed up by drawings and smaller pieces. The materials are satin, rayon, nylon, cheesecloth, nylon netting, ribbon, flannel, pellon, fiberglass rayon, and bleach, dyes and acrylic paint. These are stretched or hung from wooden slats and from points on the wall; the flimsy materials are carried up to a large scale, implying panniers or rigging. The materials are not taut, but draped in ruffled coloristic layers. They have the natural complexity of objects made lovingly by hand and the draperies, transparent and colored, are penetrated by light and stirred by drafts. Simultaneously they reveal the literal structure of the work and imply large expanding multi-layered volumes.

Joan Semmel's paintings (at 141 Prince Street) are all of couples in various stages and positions of lovemaking. They are an interesting move to bring the recent development of erotic *public* art into line with a traditional method of painting, the tonal modeling of solid form. She makes grave, ponderous conjunctions of solids out of coupling figures, their interlocking arms and legs and collisions of torsos signifying compositional rigor and sexual union. The traditional resource and the expanded subject matter work well together. Semmel used to be an Abstract painter and that can lead to a hang-up in realistic work: there is a tendency for converted Abstract painters to handle subjects that can be painted flat, so that the world is reduced to a series of puns on Abstract painting. Semmel avoids this trap and her powerful forms occupy a deep perspective space, projecting and receding massively.

The close-up bodies are illuminated by strong directional lights which cast tonal gradients of unmistakable plasticity. It is in the color that her antecedents can be sensed: the naturalistically modeled bodies are colored arbitrarily: blue man and green woman, red man and purplish woman. The dramatic effect has the positive result of reducing Semmel's emphasis on shading to define form, but the color-coding does raise problems. In several cases the colors seems a legitimate variant of the Venetian custom of pairing tanned males and pale women, but I wonder if a more direct approach to the painting of flesh would not be better. The color, though it interacts in a lively way with the

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modeling, introduces a kind of stylization which the clear, tough form, in its clenched display, may not need.

Joan Snyder's new paintings (recently at Paley and Lowe) look to me of two sorts. There is a group of striated paintings in which wavering but persistent bands of color span the canvas from East to West, thickening and thinning, picking up shreds and pockets of color, along the way. The color changes are absorbed into the large ripples which are consistently maintained. These paintings show Snyder's fresh and sharp color sense but the composition seems to be a recipe for unity. I prefer the paintings, more related to her preceding works ("Spring Painting" and "Moonshine for D, L, and M"), in which the insistent regularities of recent Abstract painting are audaciously dismissed. In these paintings the color and the marks of the brush are discontinuous: colors jump, shapes proliferate; blobs, flicks, exclamations animate a restless picture plane by means of unpredictable scatter.

Recently Abstract painters have suppressed internal intricacy in their works. Snyder's best work, on the contrary, occurs when she piles up complexity inside her paintings. Instead of symmetry or monochrome, or any of the other high-unity devices (including edge-to-edge striation), she can draw on an inventory of unrepeatable forms and color. She has the manual variety of a painter like Hans Hofmann, but is free of Hofmann's hierarchic notion of composition. In Snyder's work the picture visibly stops and starts from one point to another, in opposition to the habits of harmony and closure that have dominated Abstraction. In a sense, the painting process is continually renewed: beyond the boundary of a red splash is a flutter of, say, yellow strokes; and after the yellow, maybe a lavender polygon—all freely and sensuously painted. Abstract painting has become so rule-bound and systematic that Snyder's discontinuous formal arrays, connected by physical proximity rather than by generalized precept, are salutory. She is unlike other painters of the revived gestural mode in that she does not produce a continuum of paint, the overall homogeneity of which outweighs the appearance of individual forms. Her paintings, as a result, are discursive and without redundancy. Redundancy, whether in terms of symmetry or extended color, has become both the means for achieving, and a metaphor of, formal stability in Abstract painting. Snyder, on the other hand, proposes painting that is episodic and specific from point to point. □

MUSIC / David Hamilton

Concert performances of opera continue to provide some of the more interesting musical experiences on the New York scene, despite the manifest contradictions inherent in such presentations. Occasionally this has its compensations, as in last March's offering of Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini* by the Opera Orchestra of New York: no visual realization could be half as entertaining as the gaudy and intricate stage directions of Gabriele d'Annunzio's play-libretto (adapted by Tito Ricordi), which the half-lighting in Carnegie Hall permitted us to follow. Even Eleanora Duse's abilities to enthrall an audience could not save the play from disaster in 1901, despite an elaborate décor (including an assortment of medieval ordnance that apparently functioned only imperfectly), but Tito Ricordi's perception of its operatic possibilities was certainly not mistaken. Indeed, given all the textual Wagnerisms (and such subsidiary operatic debts as that to Verdi's *Otello* in Francesca's leave-taking of her servant before the denouement), the play fairly shouts for operatic treatment. D'Annunzio's gloss on Dante, expanded along the lines of the Tristan legend, is covered with a deal of pompous medievalism and not a little nasty sadism (particularly on the part of Paolo's younger brother Malatestino), but its structure is comfortably operatic, each act centering on an encounter of the two lovers.

To his credit, Zandonai established a musical position reassuringly distant from the obvious model of Wagner's *Tristan*. There is more "learning" in his music, and also more melodic freedom, than in Boito's high-minded but constipated *Mefistofele*, if hardly the succulent popular touch of Puccini. In fact, the love music proved the least effective part of the score, whose strengths are found in the landscape painting and in the portrayal of lesser characters. If the development of the material is sometimes mechanical, the scoring is often rich and ear-catching, as in the pantomimed climax of the first act, when Paolo and Francesca fall in love at first sight: an archaicizing melody for viola pomposa set into a lush and colorful texture, expanded to a very professional climax.

To maximize these virtues, Eve Queler deployed a substantial and expert orchestra, and achieved fine balances and pacing. Raina Kabaivanska was an intense and clear-toned Francesca, Placido Domingo a powerful if occasionally forced Paolo, and Matteo Manuguerra and Nuccio Saetta made good effects as Paolo's two brothers. (It seems entirely absurd that performances such as this one cannot be made more widely available through broadcasting, as they are in any well-managed European country; doubtless, in line with the "American way" of doing things, this one will probably be circulated at exorbitant prices on "underground" records, yielding no financial return whatsoever to the performers.)

A less satisfactory enterprise in this genre was the Chicago Symphony's presentation of Act III from Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* at Carnegie Hall. To be sure, we haven't heard *Götterdämmerung* at the Met in some dozen years (it is coming up next season, of course), and Solti's presentation of *Das Rheingold* in the same circumstances a couple of years ago was indeed most remarkable. But *Rheingold* is the beginning of the *Ring* cycle, and involves no prior assumptions, so to speak; it is a self-contained whole, at least musically. *Götterdämmerung* III is the climax of a very long opera, and of a four-evening cycle; it begins with a point of relaxation (the trio of the Rhinemaidens, and their bantering with Siegfried) meant to contrast with the tremendous tensions of the preceding act, which should brood over this scene as they are gradually woven back into the explicit musical and dramatic texture. But if one starts cold from

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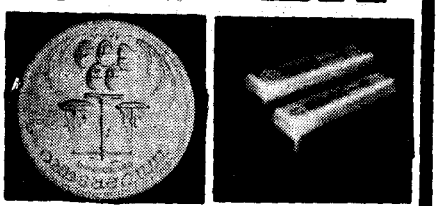

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this point, and has to build up from scratch to the final purgative climax of the entire cycle in less than an hour and a half, extraordinary stresses have to be put on a musical structure designed for other purposes. In this case, the problem was further compounded by ineffective principal singers; conceivably, if the qualities of Martti Talvela's Hagen and Donald Gramm's Gunther had extended to Jess Thomas' Siegfried and Helga Dernesch's Brünnhilde, Solti would not have had to hit every point over the head and telegraph every orchestral punch. But the tenor's dry, constricted sound could not expand into the legato lines demanded by Siegfried's death scene, and the soprano sang consistently under the note and under the necessary level of authority. The sheer sound of the Chicago Symphony was, as always, a pleasure, but it was a performance skewed, almost inevitably, away from Wagner's purpose.

That Ernest Bloch's *Macbeth*, vintage 1910, should never have been performed in New York seems amazing in retrospect, but we are lucky that it came to us first in a staged performance, and especially in such a plausible one as the American Opera Center of the Juilliard School provided. For it is the aptness and honesty of Bloch's music to Edmond Fleg's relatively literal adaptation of Shakespeare, rather than any obvious tonal or vocal appeal, that give the work power. There were some problems. The English translation used here—made by Bloch and Alex Cohen—fitted Shakespeare's words as closely as possible to vocal lines originally composed for a French text, and the results were not always fortunate; lines as familiar as these can easily appear ludicrous if wrongly stressed, and there was much awkward prosody in evidence. A scene was omitted, and the others rearranged into two instead of three acts. John Houseman's production was handsome but old-fashioned in the wrong tradition; one might have preferred Paris 1910 to American Classic Shakespearean. But the orchestra under Peter Herman Adler played well, and the singing was forceful (except for the amplified offstage voices, some of which ran into microphone noise problems), so that the work's impact came over. The 30-year-old Bloch clearly drew upon *Boris* and *Pelléas*, and on some regions of French music of that immediate pre-Stravinsky era that we do not know well, but the opera has its own kind of convincing totality. It would be good to hear it again—a hope inspired by fleeting reflection on what will happen to this obviously expensive physical production after merely three performances. □

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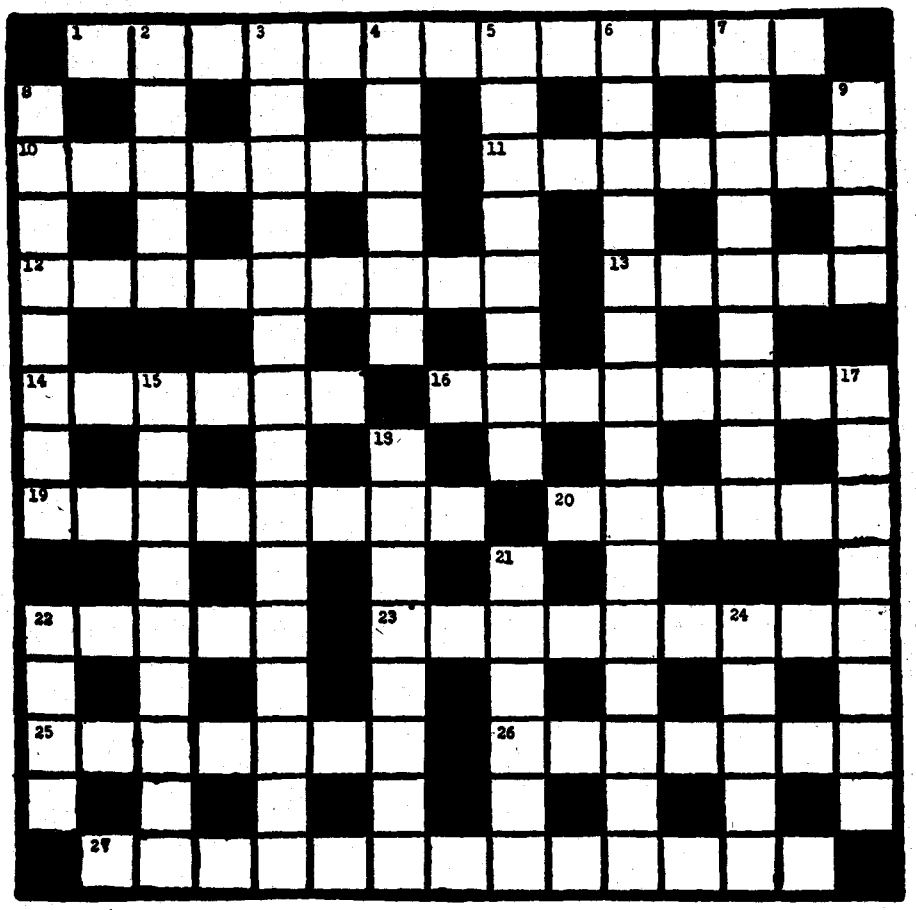
Crossword Puzzle No. 1492

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Strange that one has bare associations with such a modest garment! (6,7)
10 Statement:—old human skill for the handicraftsman. (7)
11 For thee it might be archaic as a form concerning something. (7)
12 Sales gimmick let loose at present? (4,5)
13 The brave might have been protected by such a blow. (5)
14 Ill-fitting suit an old Texan tailored. (6)
16 Alternatively surrounded by branches of the various local administrations? (8)
19 Misdealt ace captures about what might be on the table in a late afternoon session! (3-5)
20 Possibly a key performance at the beginning of the season. (6)
22 Make a suitable adjustment to find it in a propeller or steering apparatus. (3,2)
23 It might offer a sop to the one proficient in manipulation. (9)
25 It takes a person of low manners to affirm the construction of the body. (7)
26 Did he use a sort of plant as a 20? (3,4)
27 You could tell if you do! (5,3,5)

DOWN

2, 22 down and 9 Superficially, that's where the hardest part of sheer climbing comes in. (2,3,4,2,2)
3 Truly old, but new—as we might read. (10,5)
4 After an inconclusive race, this might prove a drain. (3-3)
5 It's broken as a rule, or it might be in the background. (8)
6 The result might be so prime, but such a suit could fit one who wants to change frequently. (6,2,7)
7 Traditionally weak heart, for example, perhaps associated in a modest way with an ecclesiastic air. (4,5)
8 An equal part of pig-food is implied, as well as a lowering of standards. (4-4)
9 See 2 down
15 Took off, perhaps. (7,2)
17 Possibly he adores being touchy! (8)
18 Star comedians necessarily must have one of the party return. (8)
21 What the latest RAF example shows can be done by other planes as well. (6)
22 See 2 down
24 Not a loss once more! (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1491

ACROSS: 1 to 6 Rake in the money; 9 Unnoted; 10 Caribou; 11, 20 and 27 Hit below the belt; 12 Egoist; 13 Clog; 15 Accursed; 16 Buddha; 18 Dosing; 23 Unit; 24 Unfair; 25 Mob; 28 Bugbear; 29 Replace; 30 Elect; 31 Yardstick. DOWN: 1 and 15 Rough-and-tumble; 2 and 22 Kinetic energy; 3 In the wrong; 4 Tadpoles; 5 Excise; 6 Mare; 7 Nibbled; 8 Your Grace; 14 Autographs; 17 Repairer; 19 Shingle; 21 Tympani; 26 Break.

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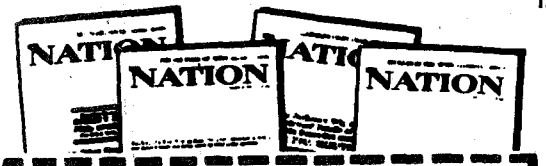

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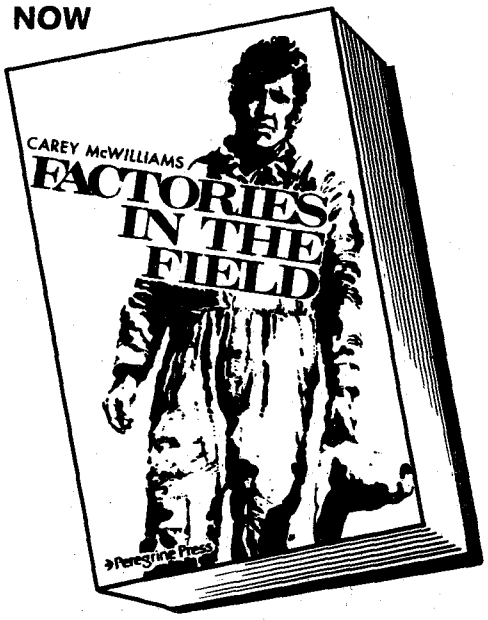

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